READ "A RACE WITH DEATH," IN THE NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE OF THE LEDGER
A WILD STORY OF THREATENED TRAIN WRECK BY ALVAH MILTON KERR

THE CHICAGO LEDGER

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AN EASTER BONNET

Where lilies hid the Latin text,
And smilax wreathed the altar,
And every head was gravely bent
O'er sacred psalm and psalter,
And all the font was pink and white
With roses strewn upon it,
He saw a little maid in gray,
Who wore an Easter bonnet.

He walked behind her from the church
And viewed her girlish grace;
And breathed the vague, delicious scent
Of dainty bows and lace.
A prayer-book was in her hand—
She kept her glances on it,
Till came a gust of frolic wind
And whisked away her bonnet.

Her eyes were full of April tears,
Her scarlet lips were smiling;
The sunny curls about her brow
Were made for man's beguiling.
Her face was like a dewy rose—
He paused to gaze upon it,
And found that he had lost his heart,
And she had lost her bonnet.

But now a spray of orange flowers
Is wreathed about the Latin;
The little maid is all in white—
A dream of lace and satin.
And, as he takes her slender hand,
And slips the ring upon it,
He murmurs softly in her ear—
A blessing on the bonnet!

The Invisible Bride;

Or, THE MYSTERY OF A NIGHT

By T. C. Harbaugh

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Pegrue, No. 13, Lydia E. Pinkham's publications can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, or our agents, or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER IX.

I PLAY DETECTIVE.

IF WHAT Sara Thornton said was true I was certain of one thing.

The bride of the house in Holden Square was not the young girl who had been found dead—murdered—in Odeon Park. But did Mrs. Thornton really know?

Putting away the brief letter, which only accentuated the mystery, I resolved to make a little investigation on my own account.

Not long after reading it I presented myself at the door of No. 9 Holden Square.

In response to my ring the portal was opened, not by the maid who had admitted me on the eventful third of June, but by a woman whom I now saw for the first time.

From her manner I concluded that I was an utter stranger to her, and upon asking if she had rooms to rent I was promptly admitted.

"The first floor is at your disposal," said she. "My late tenants left rather unceremoniously, but I must say that they did not leave me in the lurch financially."

I went in and was conducted to the parlor on the right of the hall. Being somewhat feverishly, for I stood in the apartment where I had gone to investigate the mummery which made me the husband of—whom?

The room was well furnished, but the dark curtain was missing, but with little effort I could conjure up the scene of the wedding night in spite of its absence.

"Your last tenants were good people, eh?" I asked eagerly.

"I saw but little of them," was the reply. "My rooms are in the back of the house, second floor. They gave me no trouble and it was not my business to annoy them."

"Certainly not."

"The gentleman who rented the floor seemed a person of wealth, for he did not haggle over the price."

"A city gentleman?"

"I cannot say. He came and went when he pleased and the rooms were tidied by his own servant."

"A young lady?"

"I saw her but the once and then for a moment only. She seemed distant and I didn't force myself upon her."

"Was the gentleman the head of a family?"

"Really, I cannot say. Once I thought his daughter was with him, for I did, now that I remember, catch sight of a young woman who was not the maid."

"What was she like—the second one, I mean?"

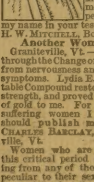
"You have me there," said the woman with a smile. "It was like seeing a ghost. She was gone in a moment."

"And the gentleman? He annoyed no one and had no visitors?"

HER PHYSICIAN APPROVES

Taking Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound

Sabattus, Maine.—"You told me to take Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound and Liver Pills for child-birth, and we are all surprised to see how much good it did. My physician said I would doubt it was the Compound that helped you. I thank you for your kindness in advising me and give you full permission to use



my name in your testimonials."—Mrs. H. W. MITCHELL, Box 3, Sabattus, Me.

Another Woman Helped.

Graniteville, S. C.—"I was passing through the Change of Life and suffered from nervousness and other annoying symptoms. Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound restored my health and strength, and proved worth mountains of gold to me. For the sake of other suffering women I am willing you should publish my letter."—Mrs. CHARLES BARCLAY, R.F.D., Graniteville, Vt.

Women who are passing through this critical period or who are suffering from any of those distressing ills peculiar to their sex should not lose sight of the fact that for thirty years Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, which is made from roots and herbs, has been the standard remedy for female ills. In almost every community you will find women who have been restored to health by Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound

"None that I ever saw."

"When they went out they took their baggage with them?"

"They went away after dark and I did not even see them go. In one sense I never had tenants just like them."

"I will look the rooms over," said I.

She readily agreed to this and told me of the entrances and exits before she left me alone.

My first care was to closely inspect the room of the midnight ceremony. It offered no surprises. The furniture was the same I had seen before and everything was still there but the curtain.

Crossing the hall I entered the next apartment in which I had received the ten thousand dollars. Here, too, the desk stood against one of the walls, whereas it had occupied the middle of the room. It seemed to offer no clue, but I resolved to give it more than passing notice.

It was one of those old-fashioned affair, which probably had done service in some other house. There was no lid, having previously parted the heavy brown curtains of the two windows.

A litter of clitter lay in the bottom of the desk and I scraped it together at a venture.

"Nothing," was my thought as they left no clue behind.

I was on the eve of dropping the last handful of papers when my gaze was arrested by a bit of scarlet paper that looked more like a fragment which promised no results, but I separated it from the mass and went to the window.

The light revealed the delicate chirography that filled each word.

The characters were small and well defined, the lines even and symmetrical, and I soon saw that I held in my hand the writing of a person of intelligence.

Then my eyes swept across the page, containing a sentence in two, and this is what I read:

"——I hope will end soon. You cannot believe how anxious I am to be all by myself. He treats me well but it's a risky move. There's zeal or woe in it for poor Flora. The time approaches for the ceremony——"

I smiled all too soon for me. I turned the sheet over but, the top being gone, I could not learn what followed. Flora, perhaps. Perhaps the writer of the letter had never finished it, owing to an interruption of some sort, or changed her mind entirely.

What would I not have given to have the remainder of that letter!

Placing the torn letter in my pocket, I turned again to the confused heap of clitter, but it had yielded me all it could, so I left the lid of the old desk and turned away. It had been a long and fruitless search for me, indeed.

Suddenly I heard footsteps at the door, and, as I turned, perceived I stood face to face with the landlady.

"Oh!" she cried with a little start, "you are still inspecting?"

"I am about through," said I.

"Indeed!"

"I would ask that the rooms be cleaned should I take them," I continued. "I find some clitter in the desk——"

"I understand. We will have the house set at rights for you in a day or two at the latest. Don't you like it? The neighborhood is excellent, the rent is low and——"

"I came through the park," I interrupted.

"I wonder if they ever learned who the young girl was who was found dead on the night of the third?"

"I don't know. I never read the papers—the prayer-book is good enough for me. Did they find a girl there?"

"Yes—dead among the bushes."

"That's what young girls get for being out late. I pity the parents of such young thing."

"How do you know she was wicked?"

"She must have been, else why was she found dead in Odeon Park? Good girls die at home."

I could not suppress a smile at the woman's words.

"Maybe, after all, she was the same girl who came into the house that night."

"Did one come?"

"Yes, and it's the only time I've had a real fright in ten years."

"Was she looking for rooms?"

"No, I was just happened, you know—on the staircase when I heard the bell. The gentleman who had been occupying rooms the ring himself and the girl—I couldn't see her face very well, though—she was neatly dressed—just sprang past him."

"Well——"

"He just caught hold of her and kept her from reaching the door across the corridor."

"Indeed!"

"What I saw took my breath"—you're no officer, are you?"

"Just an everyday citizen," I replied.

"Well, what happened then?"

"The light in the hall went out. I'm quite sure the gentleman had his hands full with the young girl, and I didn't dare to call. You'd not wanted here!' I heard him say, and when the light came on again they were gone."

"Did the girl get ejected?"

"Put out, you mean? I can't say. I told no one but Flora, my help, and she watched nearly all night on the hall for the stairease, which I wouldn't have done for the world."

"And what did Flora see?"

"Bless you she never stayed to tell me, getting the wrong end of the broom. She got since and I've got one now who don't sit on the stairsteps and watch my tenants."

"The girl went away, did she?"

"Yes, and hasn't come back for the half week's wage that's coming to her."

"Where does Flora live?"

"Somewhere in Acorn Row, if you know where that is—I don't."

"Maybe she saw nothing, but took occasion to go off from some unexplained motive. What is Flora's full name?"

"She called herself Nickum, but whether that's the name her parents gave her I don't know."

I made a mental note of the name and changed the subject.

I would be back in a day or so and let her know if I wanted the rooms. My wife, I said, was out of the city just now and I had been left to do the house hunting for her. If the house suited us we would take it, and with this I walked from 39 Holden Square, where I had entered for the second time, and heard the same door close behind me.

I had found nothing but the torn letter and—the name of a serving, inquisitive maid.

Should I hunt up Glidden and put the case in his hands? No, I would run down the next train myself, for I believed that Flora Nickum knew what she had not dared make known to her mistress.

CHAPTER X.

THE GIRL OF ACORN ROW.

Acorn Row is not Murray Hill.

The proprietors of riches never pose down its pavements and the silks and satins of its upper ten never dazzle in the sunlight that now and then falls upon the stones of that quarter of the city.

Not wishing to be seen in Acorn Row before sundown, I did not invade its precincts until after the lights had flashed over the city.

Looking for Flora, the maid, in Acorn Row seemed as much like looking for a finding the proverbial needle in the haystack.

People of the human abyss met me on every hand as I descended deeper into the purlieus of the Row, and at last I paused before a house that, by the light of a lamp in the doorway of the best house within sight, I discovered to be the right one. Here I stop and paused for a closer inspection.

Quickly my eyes took in naught but the act, and was in her very presence before she could escape.

"I beg your pardon, miss," said I. "I am in search of some information."

The girl, who had risen, remained silent.

"I am hunting a servant and have been directed here."

"Well, who are you looking for?"

"One who's been recommended to see me Miss Nickum."

"*Yo Nickum!*" cried the girl with astonishment.

"Yes, Flora Nickum."

"Well, I'm Flora Nickum, her."

For a moment I could not credit what I had plainly heard. That fate or fortune had thrown me face to face with the object of my search was astonishing. The girl shrank into the deeper shadows of the area and she seemed about to shut me out when I spoke again.

"Do you are Miss Nickum?" I said, hardly knowing that in one sense I was disputing her words.

"That's the name my parents gave me," she said with a little laugh.

"Then you are the young lady I want to see."

She looked behind her and took a long breath. Then she beckoned me forward, and in a little while I was seated in a poorly furnished room with the light of a lamp full upon my quarry and myself.

"You're lately been at No. 29 Holden Square?" I began, when the girl bounded from her chair and stood before me.

"There's no use, sir, what you are!" she exclaimed. "You're an officer!"

"I am nothing of the kind."

"You're a detective, then first, but I guess, to be sure, I'll keep mum."

She was a bright young girl, but the surroundings did not show her off to advantage.

"I have been visiting the janitress of No. 29," I went on, watching her closely.

"And you want to know—what?"

"You left the place rather abruptly?"

"That was my lookout."

"Yes, undoubtedly. You are not going back?"

"Not house? Well, I reckon not."

At this she crossed the room and opened a door which looked into another apartment.

When she came back she looked more composed and seated herself in a distance in silence.

"What do you want to know?" she asked. "The information you seek is connected with my stay at No. 29?"

"Yes."

"I don't care to know what you saw from the top of the house," I resumed, ressuringly. "You may keep that secret to yourself."

"You're a clever gentleman," she laughed with considerable affable if you sought information about my which could get nothing for your trouble."

"I did saw something of the last tenants—"I saw a little."

"The young gentleman who rented the first flat?"

"Yes. Do you know him?"

"But slightly. His daughter—"

"She was a beauty if I do say it myself." Nickum broke in, slightly.

"Just couldn't help it, though she was in the house for two nights only."

"Oh, she didn't come when he did?"

"Not for six weeks afterward. I didn't see her when she came, nor till the second night."

"What day of the month was that?"

"The third, for I know by its being my birthday."

"Would you mind telling me what the young lady looked like?"

I bent eagerly forward for the girl's reply, but, to my astonishment, her lips closed like the jaws of a vise.

"I can't do that, sir," she said. "I wish you hadn't come here."

I drew from my pocket some bills which I displayed suggestingly. Flora Nickum's eyes flashed and she went back across the room.

"You're trying to get me into trouble, you are," she cried. "I won't, I won't, so that's the end of it!"

I tried another tack.

(Continued on page three.)

A LITTLE THING

Changes the Home Feeling.

Coffee blots out the sunshine from many a home by making the mother, or some other members of the household, dyspeptic, nervous and irritable. There are thousands of cases where the proof is absolutely undeniable. Here is one.

A Wis. mother writes:

"I was taught to drink coffee at an early age, and also at an early age became a victim to headaches, and as I grew to womanhood these headaches became a part of me, as I was scarcely ever free from them.

"About five years ago a friend induced me to try Postum. I made the trial and the result was so satisfactory that we have used it ever since.

"My husband and little daughter were subject to bilious attacks, but they have both been entirely free from them since we began using Postum instead of coffee. I no longer have headaches and my health is perfect."

If some of these nervous, tired, irritable women would only leave off coffee absolutely and try Postum they would find a wonderful change in their life. It would then be filled with sunshine and happiness rather than weariness and discontent. And think what an effect it would have on the family, for the mother is the one who largely responsible for the temper of the children.

Read "The Road to Wellville," in pkgs. "There's a Reason."

Ever read the above letter? A new one appears from time to time. They are genuine, true, and full of human interest.

Ever "Green."

A traveling salesman died very suddenly in Kalamazoo, Mich., and undertaker grabbed the florists to make a wreath; the ribbon was to be white, with the usual inscription, "Rest in peace," on both sides, and if there was room enough, a verse of poetry.

The florist was out of town, and his new assistant handled the job. It was a startling floral production that arrived for the funeral. The ribbon was extra wide, and the inscription, "Rest in peace," was on both sides, and if there is room we shall meet there."

Workers Captured by New Steel Shoes.

That the American workman is at last enjoying true foot comfort and health as well as shoe economy is evidenced by the astonishing demand that every mail pours into the factory of the Steel Shoe Company, Racine, Wis. The factory is working at a terrific rate to keep pace with the demand. Following the recent edict of the success of "steels" is that they solve the long standing problem of a perfect work shoe. They combine flexibility and solid foot comfort with long-lasting qualities and are the only protection against rheumatism and stiffness after a long day's work. They prevent corns and bunions, and are guaranteed to outlast several pairs of other all-leather shoes. There is a free copy of the interesting booklet "The Role of Steel," waiting for every reader of this paper. Write a letter or postal immediately. If you would like to know more about these truly wonderful shoes send a postal card today to Steel Shoe Company, Department 61, Racine, Wis., and get that great little book.

The Only Way.

"It takes a woman to outwit a lawyer," declared a woman to a lawyer. The lawyer looked into the eyes of the woman and said:

"I know it sounds incredible, still there are occasions when a lawyer is not the chief beneficiary of a suit.

"A friend of mine in the West sued a railroad company for damages and secured a verdict of $25,000, which was paid. Her counsel collected 40 per cent of it.

"She married him," the woman concluded, with a triumphant smile.

BIG COMPANY DISTRIBUTES BIG MEDICAL BOOK FREE.

The well known Pierce Co. of Buffalo, is advertising its business by giving away free of charge copies of the "People's Common Sense Medical Adviser." This famous book has 1,008 pages with engravings and color plates and the copies of the last revised edition that are given away are bound in cloth. This book treats of Anatomy, Hygiene, Motherhood and the Baby and every family ought to grasp this opportunity to have by it a reliable guide. Dr. R. V. Pierce at the address given in the advertisement on page 14 of this paper.

An Overplus.

Lafferty—Tooley's new wife, I understand, has a wonderful self-assertive power.

Rafferty—She has so much of it that when Tooley broke day before yesterday the first wife's portrait in the attic the new Mrs. Tooley said that the picture he left hanging where it was, in the sitting-room.

Lafferty—But what has that to do with the lady's self-esteem?

Rafferty—Don't you see? She wanted the portrait to remain in sight, so Tooley for peace's sake would realise the great improvement he had made in his second choice.

Good News for the Deaf.

A celebrated New York Aurist has been authorized to demonstrate to deaf people that deafness is curable, and can be cured rapidly and easily in your own home. He wants to prove this fact by sending to any person writing him their ear's care a trial treatment of this new method absolutely free. Many people who have been in trouble with their ears to immediately address Dr. Edward Gardner, suite 213, No. 46 West Thirty-third street, New York City, and we wish to assure them that they will receive by return mail, absolutely free, a "Trial Treatment."

His Plausible Reason.

Seymour—Gritzler looks taller than he did before he was taken to the hospital.

Ashley—No wonder; he was carried there on a stretcher.

(Continued from page two.)

"Do you realize, Miss, that your silence may cause you much annoyance?"

"By the police?"

"I have not said so. I only ask for a description of the young woman who left the house with the man who rented the lower floor."

"Is that all?" smiled the girl, and her face brightened into an elusive smile.

"Just as you please," I said, assuming all the indifference I thought necessary. "It's nothing after all to me. Keep your secret, Miss Nickum, if you can afford to do so."

She was a hard nut to crack. That she knew something of the mysterious bride I was satisfied, and also that she could give me a clue, perhaps the very one I so much wanted.

"You were in the house all night of the third?" I ventured again."

"No, I was out, say, an hour."

"At what hour?"

"Say between ten and eleven."

"Did you repeat your staircase vigils when you returned?"

"There you go again!" she exclaimed. "You're getting away from your subject, aren't you?"

I laughed in spite of myself. I wasn't making much headway.

"You know that a wedding occurred in that house the night of the third?"

She pursed her lips a trifle and haughtily threw back her head.

"Are you the bridegroom?" rang out her voice. "Then you are much happiness if you are."

"What of the bride?"

"I don't know where she is."

"When you are not the girl who witnessed the ceremony?"

"No, sir; that was the young lady's maid."

"And she took off with the young lady?"

"I suppose so."

"Now, Miss Flora, with a little more familiarity, 'if you will tell me who the bride was—"

"Not another whimper!" she broke in springing across the room again and laying one hand on the door latch. "I've told you too much already."

Determined not to be baffled when at the threshold of the secret, I darted after her and, catching her wrist, forced her into the middle of the room.

"You will tell me!" I said sternly. "You are the person who stands between me and my bride. You shall tell me all before you are released."

Pulling back to the full length of her tether, she threw me a look and then supplemented it with a loud cry.

Mr. Tarvery flung open in my face and we nearly fell against the opposite wall as a man pushed into the room.

He was a great bulk of a fellow and his face was seamed with rage as he commanded us to release the girl. I complied and Flora Nickum staggered towards him, but passed on and reached the threshold of the room beyond.

"What dost he want to know, Flo?" asked the fellow, glancing from me to the girl.

"Never mind what, Dan. I haven't panched."

"No, and you never will," was the reply. "Say, sir," he had turned to me again, "what Flo knows she'll keep safe and sound. There's the door, girl. Don't let any one else in here."

At that moment I saw the girl slam the door in my face just in time to close upon a somewhat misty figure about to enter the room.

My heart seemed to leap into my throat, for I knew that the sight of a face strangely out of place in that habitation.

The man came towards me, his harsh manner changed into a bluff, but his tigerishness still in the foreground.

"Yonder's the door, sir!" he cried. "Me and Flo lives here."

"No one else?"

"No one else."

I fell back from before the advancing ruffian, but not till I saw the girl trying to keep the door from being opened by someone on the opposite side.

"Tell him to go if he values his life," came in a low voice from the girl of Acorn Row. "He should be satisfied with his ten thousand."

CHAPTER XI.

TRAIL OF THE SPIDER.

There was no longer a doubt in my mind that the girl of Acorn Row was familiar with the events which took place in the house in Holden Square on the night of the third.

I was also satisfied that Sara Thornton was equally well informed, for had she not told me that the mysterious bride was present at Madam Wray's soiree?

But how to worm the truth from either or both of these women was the question.

As I went down the street of the house in Acorn Row and up the dismal street which led to a more respectable part of the city, a thousand plans chased themselves through my mind.

If Mrs. Thornton could be made to divulge what she must know. But how to reach her and get at the real facts wanted more than anything else.

The night scene on the stair with the girl seated in the smoker with my plans still unperfected.

The warning note which accused me of asking questions was taken from its concealment and examined.

A voice fell upon my ear, and upon looking up I beheld a man whom I had not seen for a year.

Godron Jenks was a man of the town, one who had dissipated a snug fortune, and thereafter, drifting into all manner of chicanery, had caused himself to lose what few friends he had left. I did not care to meet him, for he was a confirmed borrower, but it was too late to avoid him.

He came over to me and, greeting me with his invariable effusiveness, took a seat on the settee alongside.

"Tarvery's," began the rolling stone, "I'm going to make good at last."

Such incoherence was unclear to Jenks and I smiled as I turned my head.

"Look here, I'm going away with a gentleman who's taken a fancy to me. He's as rich as the proverbial Jew and promises to let me recoup his expenses."

"That's nice, Jenks," said I.

"Of course it is, nice!"

"He's at the head of a great concern which will soon have gold pouring into its coffers. We'll all be millionaires by and by," and he laughed in a manner which caused me to look him full in the face as if doubting his sanity.

"Maybe," continued Jenks, as if he doubted my own sanity, "you don't take much stock in my future."

"I haven't said I don't, eh?"

"No, but—look here. Here's a letter from the gentleman. Got it but this morning," and he drew from his pocket a letter in the jerked fashion its envelope and placed in my hands.

It startled me almost the first lines caught my eye, and no wonder. The handwriting was that of Fergus, the gentleman with the mysterious man and the threats and warnings were traced.

I looked at the bottom of the sheet and saw the name "Tracy Y. Demayne."

"Well?" queried Jenks, with a smile.

"He's got a romantic name, to say the least. You've known him long?"

"I've had two interviews. We expect to sail on the 'Victoria' Saturday."

"For Europe?"

"For the rich harvest fields in France and elsewhere."

"Where is your employer now?"

"In his room at the 'Clarendon,' I suppose."

"He lives there, does he?"

"Yes."

I returned the letter and talked a little more with Jenks, who had staked over his prospects. So I had found the strange one at last. It was now but a bold play.

If I put it off he would escape me, for it was evident Jenks and the "Victoria" would sail in two days.

I looked after Jenks as he lit a fresh cigar and consorted with.

Almost immediately I rose and followed. Ten minutes later I was inside the office of the "Clarendon" and stood for a little while looking at the great marble clock that shone in gorgeous festoons everywhere. So the man who had caught me with the gold-fish bait was a guest of the "Clarendon." If this was true why was not my wife with him?

I was about to inquire at the desk for Tracy Demayne when my sleeve was plucked and I beheld Glidden standing beside me with a mysterious smile on his face.

"I've been hoping to run across you," said he, leading me to a secluded spot. "Good news."

"Of her?"

"Perhaps not exactly of her, but of the other one."

"Which one?"

"The girl who was found dead—murdered—in Odeon Park."

"Yes?"

"She was killed in 99 Holden Square."

"Indeed!" I exclaimed, my heart and fear-some glance.

"There's no doubt of it," he went on. "It's a nice trail, this double one. What have you discovered?"

"That two women know whom I married."

"Ah! you've discovered that much, have you? After a while you'll be turning detective."

"Let me out of this tangle and I promise you that I'll take care to get into no others."

"Then Mrs. Thornton knows the name of my midnight bride."

"And who, pray, are the knowing ones?"

"Sara Thornton and the girl in Acorn Row."

"The divine Sara, eh?" ejaculated Glidden. "And she told you?"

"She told me nothing, only she congratulated me on my success. I remarked that the new Mrs. Taverny looked superb at Madam Wray's soiree."

"Which must not be pretty? All young brides are, you know."

"Come, come," said I. "Could you make Sara Thornton surrender her secret?"

"When a woman won't she won't, and that's the end of it," laughed Glidden. "Say, Fergus, you look as if this is torture."

"I am very exacting. You've got your ten thousand, haven't you?"

"Yes—"

"And now you want your wife besides?"

I was inclined to become out of sorts Glidden's levity, for it was far from being a laughing matter with me.

"I am going to see Mrs. Thornton and force the truth from her."

"Don't, my boy," said Glidden pressed my arm as he looked into my eyes. "You'll meet your match if you tackle Sara Thornton. Take my advice and try the girl in Acorn Row."

This was too much. Biting my lip I turned from the detective and walked away.

Without loiding back to see what had become of Glidden, I approached the clerk. As he was a frequenter of the club, I had more than a passing acquaintance with him.

"Is Mr. Tracy Demayne in?" I asked.

"Oh, Demayne the English gentleman?"

"Yes."

"I'll send a boy up."

"Please don't," said I hastily. "He's an old friend of mine. If I knew his room—"

"Number 444, fifth floor."

"Thanks, Fergus," and I, turning away. The lift could not take me too quickly to the fifth floor, and in a few minutes I was walking down the corridor towards room 444.

At last I was to confront this man again. When my knuckles struck the door I drew back, waiting for it to open, but no answer came. Again I rapped with the same result.

"I've come to see the end of this," said I, talking half of the knob. "The spider shall not escape me."

I gave the knob a wrench and the door opened. The room lay before me.

It was lighted only by the light which, hanging in the hall, shed some rays through the half open transom. I advanced into the room and reached for the electric bulb dangling from the lofty ceiling.

In the next breath I fell back with a cry. The room was empty!

Not only this, but everything showed that it had been hastily abandoned by its last tenant. No luggage was in sight, the bed was disordered as though some one had taken a siesta on the outer covers, and the remains of a cigar lay on the marble top of the dresser.

Tracy Y. Demayne was gone.

After taking a hasty survey of the place, only to be more than ever baffled, I turned away, closed the door upon room and was again in the hall. A door just opposite 444 opened and a woman's face appeared. I could hardly suppress a startling cry, for it was the image of the face I had seen on the cold slab of the morgue!

The occupant of the other room gave me a sudden look and then withdrew.

"Did you find Mr. Demayne?" asked the clerk at the office.

"No; he must have given up the room. But tell me, Fergus, who occupies room 445?"

CHAPTER XII.

TOO INQUISITIVE.

"Room 445?" exclaimed Fergus. "It's not occupied at all."

"Aye, but it has a tenant now," I persisted. "I saw it."

Fergus turned to look at the door opposite was opened and a young woman appeared in the doorway for a moment.

"I don't understand," said the clerk. "I'll send a boy up."

"May I go with the boy?"

"Certainly, Taverny. The girls say the fifth floor is haunted."

Into the lift I went with the boy, a bright lad of twelve, and we ascended together. The little elevator, without once making a trip-tion, went down the corridor and stopped at room 445.

"It's the room across the hall," said I. "Never mind, my boy, I'll knock. You tell the clerk that the man in 444 had gone. I'll see."

He went in and looked around for a moment, then came out and nodded affirmatively.

"Now No. 445," said I.

The boy crossed the hall and knocked. There was no response and he looked up into my face in a questioning way.

"It's queer," said he. "If you saw some one in the door—opened by a lady, you say?"

"Yes. See if it is unlocked."

The uniformed page twisted the knob and opened the door. I leaned forward and looked over his head, the room was quite empty.

I stepped into the little fellow as he straightened and looked quite military. "She's gone—if ever she was here."

There was no sign of a late occupancy of the room into which I had boldly stepped. Yet I could not have been mistaken.

"It's the fifth floor ghost, I suspect," smiled the boy. "The girls have all seen her."

"Fudge! Only women see such things, I have noticed. Now, my manners, my boy."

"I don't know," said the boy in a confidential tone. "Once I saw her once."

"You? What was she like?"

"Tall, with a white face, dressed in white, and she came out of a room on this floor."

"Tall or short, boy?"

"Rather tall, for no one ever see'd a short ghost."

"Angle an' me see'd it the same time and Angle says it was tall, but I says it hadn't laughed, though my teeth chattered."

"Come!" cried I, sensibly disgusted with such chatter. "I'll give you one in 445 now; that's certain."

I turned on again.

"It was the fifth floor ghost," reported the boy to the clerk, not wishing to catch Fergus' eye, I turned away and went out into the night.

I was certain that I had seen a woman of flesh and blood come to the door of 445, but she was gone now. Ghosts do not open and close doors which make a noise when they are opened and closed, and if the bellboy wanted to believe that I had been deceived by the spook of the hotel, he could have all the enjoyment out of the belief he could get.

I was in the act of leaving the vicinity of the "Clarendon" when I felt a hand on my arm. It was the bell-boy.

"Mr. Fergus would like to see you, sir," said he, and I turned back.

"See here, Taverny, don't give the place away," said Fergus over the counter in low tones. "We've had trouble enough already through the gabbling girls about the ghost of the fifth floor."

"I certainly shall not," said I. "But it was no ghost, Fergus. It was flesh and blood."

"Glad to hear you say that, Taverny, but what become of her?"

"That's the mystery."

Once more I stood on the pavement with the light of the hotel in my face.

Suddenly there came from the ladies' en-

(Continued on page seven.)

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CHAPTER VI.

A NARROW ESCAPE.

MURDER! Murder!

That awful shriek rang out, dying away in a stifled moan as Horace Littlefield's muscular white fingers grasped Millicent's throat.

Furious with anger, he buried her from him with a fearful oath, and reeling blindly, she fell, her temple striking against the sharp edge of a vise clamped to a projecting shelf where the girl had deposited her apron.

Without sound or cry more she sank to the floor, her deathly white face stained with blood.

He had not intended to murder her; the action was one of blind rage, but in the instant the awful danger of his position flashed through his brain.

Kneeling upon the floor by her side, he raised her hand; it fell back upon his arm, a wintry thing, into the bosom of which nestled its pulsations, stilled by the horror of his crime.

Was this murder that he had done? That slender form lay stretched before him corpse-like. The beautiful head raised, the little white hands falling helplessly by her side, the wide-brown eyes half-closed, the trailing dark tresses dabbled in blood, the cold, statuesque face white as a snow-wreath.

The awful truth burst upon him, overwhelming him with fear and horror. Beautiful Mildred lay before him dead—dead by his hand, upon which the warm, red-brown blood clung like molten fire, staining and burning into his very soul.

"Oh, my God! have I killed her? Am I, indeed, a murderer?" Speak to me, Milly! Tell me that you live!" he whispered hoarsely, the great beads of perspiration standing upon his cold forehead. But there was no response from those lips which were stilled forever, and the head, which he had raised to his breast with a shudder, the instinct of self-preservation overpowered the awful horror of his crime.

Milly was dead, and he must hide his crime from the world, if he would make his escape from the building unseen by mortal eye.

On the floor below a dozen working girls were busy; the steady hum and jar of the machinery would drown the sound of his movements.

He glanced at his watch, and found that he had yet half an hour before the stipulated time for over-work would expire.

He must conceal the body, but where? Search of the building would reveal the deed; he did not fall him just now.

"In the unseen wheel-pit below the light shaft, I will hide her," he muttered between his chattering teeth. "I alone have the key to the door which opens and unlocked for years. The old wheel-pit must be her grave."

He tiptoed across the empty chamber, occupying the greater portion of that upper floor, and carefully laid the door opening upon the staircase to the second floor. Secured from interruption, he then gathered the light figure in his arms, shuddering as it lay passively in his hold, and looking from side to side as if accusing apparitions of the forms he had left in the brace might glide from the shadows, he walked swiftly to a trap at the extremity of the room, concealed by a dozen empty boxes and a heap of odds and ends of machinery, which had been left undisturbed for years. Placing his burden upon the floor, he hastily drew aside the boxes, unsealing the trap door, which he unhasped with fingers that shook nervously.

A narrow flight of steps led downward, lost in the darkness below, the continuous length, passing through the basement story, and quite detached from the remaining portions of the building, which was being unused, unknown, or quite forgotten.

Steadying his burden upon one arm, he closed the trap door, and raised his key was carefully downward until he reached a small, oblong cell, used by the tenants of the mills.

The only outlet was by the way he had come, but a current of cool air circulated freely, coming through an opening into an air-shaft, which terminated in the upper floor. A heavy grating covered the narrow space.

With trembling nerves, he dropped his lifeless burden, wrapped it in the heavy shawl the poor girl had taken from her back with the cheap straw hat, which he had not removed from her head.

He had not forgotten to destroy all traces of her presence from the labeling room.

Next moment he had closed and locking the narrow door, he fled up the damp staircase, carefully locking the trap a few inches, peered through the narrow crack, then raised the door wide and stepped into the apartment above.

Hastily dropping the section of the flooring and replacing boxes and debris as he had found them, he retraced his steps to the labeling room, to him a chamber of horrors.

When the unfortunate girl fell, her heavy waterproof apron was thrown down to cover the spot where her fair head struck the floor. He removed the vise and the boards instantly, but not a trace of his crime remained. Placing the apron beneath the faucet at the sink, he washed away the crimson drops and, throwing the garment across the high stool, extinguished the lights, unlocked the door, stumbled down the staircase and sped out upon the street, now almost deserted.

With a horrible remorse clutching his heart in an iron grasp, and the mark of Cain upon his brow, he hastened on like an evil shadow, not to the bridge spanning the river between the town of Riverdale and the opposite shore, but to a little cove above the dam and the two rapids where the waters whirled in swirling eddies.

Here a gaily painted rowboat, his own property, lay moored, and stepping in, he plied the oars with the strength of a madman, and with such frantic violence that the blade in his right hand was torn from his grasp and floated swiftly away upon the surface of the rapidly flowing stream.

He leaned over the side of the boat, clutching wildly at the receding oar, unheeding for the instant that his course was changed down stream, and that he was being rapidly carried toward the dam.

When he remembered, he was frightfully near the dangerous point from which it would be impossible to retreat, and with the perspiration oozing from every pore, he turned his single oar to serve as a paddle.

Was he successful in his trick? His face was white and ghastly, his hands bleed from the cuts the coarse rope of the rapids, each instant growing more distant, he fancied he could again hear the dying moan of his victim, now lying cold and lifeless in that dark, gruesome-bound cell beneath the Haseldon Mills, and he groaned aloud in his anguish.

With fresh energy he wrenched the carelessly secured seat from its fastenings, drawing it into the bottom of the boat, and using the-narrow board as an oar, rowed with strength of despair, heading up stream, but in spite of his almost superhuman efforts, it seemed as if he must be engulfed in the boiling, surging waters, so near that he half closed his eyes and held his breath in anticipation of the shock.

It was an age of almost unendurable agony, but the boat shot past the rapids fiercely with the mad current, and a horrible, sickening dread filled his breast, but he had left the danger behind him, and that was sweeping rapidly onward, then turned the boat's head in the direction of eddies, gaining not a hairbreadth, and he paused to take breath.

"God forgive me for my fearful crime and spare my wretched life! Merciful Saviour, spare my soul!"

As if, indeed, Heaven had granted his wretched prayer for mercy, the little craft boat floated into smooth waters, half a dozen yards from the shore.

With a half-muttered cry of thankfulness he rowed, and in five minutes drew his boat high and dry on the bank, and sank down helplessly beside it, utterly exhausted with his terrible task.

But he must not linger, and rising, he hurried away, his brain reeling, and that awful cry, the last shriek of his victim ringing in his ears; never pausing in his mad haste, he fled onward.

Not a glimmer of light shone from the windows as he entered the grounds at Haselden, and stealing along in the shadow of the high brick wall, under the trees, turned the key in the lock and made his way to his own chamber.

Turning on the gas, he grasped a decanter, filled a goblet nearly to the brim with the strong liquor, and drained it at a single draught.

The powerful stimulant mounted to his brain, clearing away the mists, the blood began to throb more evenly through his chilled veins, and the necessity for concealment of his crime outweighed his remorse.

"Richard is himself again," he muttered. "I didn't intend to kill her. I am not an intentional assassin, and I must not allow suspicion to attach to me through any change of manner. I will try to sleep off the horror which might betray me."

He was usually abstemious, and the powerful draught he had swallowed soon steeped his senses in oblivion.

Hastily undressing, he threw himself upon his couch and almost in a moment fell into the deep stupor of intoxication.

CHAPTER VII.

HAUNTED.

"Milly! Milly, where are you! It is half-past eleven o'clock and we are going home. Harry, or the watchman will be putting out the lights!" called Ellen Page from the foot of the staircase leading to the third story.

The noisy machinery was still, and through the echoing rooms the call rang out shrilly, but no voice replied.

"Good gracious! I wonder now what is keeping her! Milly, I sa—a—a-y! Milly-y-y!" again screamed Ellen.

"What's the use of standing here shrieking like a lunatic; let's go up and bring her down!" called Sophie Blake. "Come on!"

Thus urged by Ellen, Sophie made her way to the third story, while at the foot of the staircase the other girls clustered, awaiting the return of their companions.

Springing up the stairs, two at a time, Sophie hastened to the labeling room and threw open the closed door, starting back with a low exclamation of surprise.

The place was dark, silent, empty.

"Millicent she's gone!" without a word —given us the slip. I think it's real mean of her," declared Ellen, as she turned and hurried down the stairs, Sophie clasping her hand half in terror.

"Where can she be out?" exclaimed Sophie to her waiting companions. "Most likely she's at the boarding house; she is going to sleep there tonight, you know; she's skittish about going home so late; she is probably asleep in bed. I left a piece of my mind tomorrow for serving us such a nasty trick, see if I don't."

"Are you sure?" asked Hattie Bugbee, a tone of uneasiness in her voice, for now Littlefield coming downstairs not more than five minutes ago, and she must have been there then."

"Well, she's not there now, at any rate!" snapped Ellen. "Come on!"

"Most likely she came down with Littlefield; he's sweet on her, you know. No good will come of it, though; he's too proud to marry anything serious with a poor mill girl," remarked Sophie.

"No, he was alone," put in Hattie, positively. "I saw him. He is not long, and, of course, he wouldn't think a working girl fit to wipe his shoes on, but all the same, he was alone, and with his hat drawn over his eyes, and hurrying as if the Old Nick was at his heels. I shouldn't wonder if he had been trying to take some liberties and got

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a slap in his face for his pains. I'll bet a cookie she got mad and cried, and he cleared out for fear we would find it out and it would get to Bruce," concluded Hattie, sagely.

"His face has been black as a thundercloud ever since the strike was on. He's as mad as a hatter, but there's one comfort, we can be in bed as long as ever we choose for a little while," cut in pretty Mollie Corbin, rather irrelevantly.

They had been very confident that Mildred had gone to their boarding house, but when Ellen Page lighted the lamp in the little room she occupied, no sweet face nestled on the scanty pillow, the patchwork quilt was smooth as when tucked carefully by Ellen's hands.

Perplexed, and a little frightened,—Ellen hurried into the adjoining chamber, where two beds furnished sleeping accommodations for four girls.

"Is Milly here?" she called.

"No!" chorused the girls.

"Milly isn't in my bed, wherever she's gone, and one of you girls must come in and sleep with me. I'm afraid to stay alone, somehow," declared Ellen, and Sophie Blake good naturedly, accompanied her back to her own chamber.

Allan Bruce returned by the night train, but Mrs. Stanford was asleep. It was nine o'clock the following morning when he came down to breakfast, and the widow was pouring the second cup of coffee when the doorbell rang. Allan answered the call and found Ellen Page standing upon the step.

"Where is Milly?" he inquired.

"That's what we would all like to know," answered Ellen, and then, with a volubility unsual in the girls-tongued maiden, the truth came out.

"My precious! whatever is the matter?" she gasped, gazing into the handsome, resolute face, which every trace of color had faded. "You don't think she has eloped or over anything dreadful has happened?" A terrified expression creeping into her sunny blue eyes, as the widow arose from her half-finished breakfast, and grasped the young man's arm with a hand that shook as with a palsy. "Oh, my baby, my darling!" sobbed the mother. "She may have set out for home and some accident may have befallen her on the way, or she may have fainted in fact in that great, dismal room. She is not strong. Oh, Allan, Allan, we must find her!"

"I'm going to search the mill at once. I think she's fainted; come with me, mother. I wonder you didn't give the alarm," he continued, turning to Ellen.

The decisive ring in his tones was indicative of the strength of will veiled under his usually calm demeanor, and trying the widow's hat-ribbons under her quivering chin, he gave her his arm and hurried away, leaving Ellen to speculate upon the most probable cause of Milly's strange and unaccountable disgrance, while she locked the door.

"Good gracious! I ain't to blame. I'm as sorry as ever I can be, but," whimpered Ellen, the tears standing in her blue eyes, "I wish to gracious I'd known enough, but we were sure she had gone home."

Ellen followed with flying steps; a rapid walk brought the three to the mill. Supporting her half-fainting widow, he ascended the stairs and opened the door leading into the packing room in the third story empty of machinery, but with tier after tier of stock piled upon two sides, and in the further room, directly in front of the unsightly pile of boxes and debris—that was all, just that floor had been cleaned ever since he had been an employe at Hasselden Mill, and it was into the labeling room, partitioned in the nearest corner, he looked about.

There was absolutely nothing there to guide his search; Milly's daisy-wreathed hat was gone from the hook where it usually hung during working hours; her heavy working shoes and lying across the high stool where she had left it folded.

Allan called the watchman, and the little party explored every portion of the factory, but no trace was discovered of the missing girl.

"Taint no use, sir, not the least bit in the world. I don't here; I've been here the mill about a quarter o' ten, and she went out through the gate. I'll swear to that on a stack o' Bibles!" averred Murray.

He firmly believed that he was speaking the truth, although the woman he had seen leaving the mill yard was his own cousin's wife, who had called at about nine o'clock, bringing a tempting lunch for her husband, and, quite unknown to him, she had remained gossiping for nearly an hour, with the girls in the labeling room.

Mrs. Murray was young and slenderly built, in height and form much like Milly, for whom her husband had mistaken her in the shadows cast by the high enclosure, as she passed through the gate.

That day the Hasselden Mill was closed, and only night watchman remained to keep upon the little shakedown in his own private office, while advertisements for "experienced help" were inserted in the daily papers.

In the evening a meeting was called by the Labor Union, while a grim silence was maintained by the striking employes, the lull before the storm.

Meanwhile the search for pretty, Mildred went on, led by Allan; advertisements were inserted in morning and evening papers, both in Riverdale and the large cities throughout the State; the police were notified, detectives were employed, and in the great manufacturing town of Riverdale the excitement was intense.

Whispers of foul play circulated freely, but the perpetrator of the supposed crime was unknown, unsuspected.

For days the quest was continued, but beetless fruitless; there was not a trace of the missing girl, and at last rumors became rife, whispered at first, boldly spoken at length, that for some cause, known only to Mildred herself, and perhaps a lover, she had destroyed her life.

Above and below the rapids the river was dragged, and the grappling hooks brought up many a strange haul, but not the body of the beauty of Hasselden Mill, who had vanished so suddenly.

Among all who wondered and sought, not one, save Bruce, had the slightest suspicion of the man whose hidden crime lay dark on heart and brain.

It was hardly a suspicion, but rather a distrust. Allan could neither exercise or analyze.

Horace Littlefield passed him by upon the street without a sign of recognition, but with averted face and downcast eyes, quite natural under the circumstances of the strike, perhaps, but the young man noticed the strained, furtive glances bestowed upon him, and pondered upon their significance.

Littlefield hadn't got been idle. He had added five hundred dollars to the reward offered by young Bruce, for information concerning the missing girl, had himself guided a trio of detectives through every portion of the mill; every nook, every corner underwent a thorough search except the Hasselden section, the secret passage, and the ancient wheel-pit, known only to the owner, or if known, quite forgotten by those who had been employed at the mill for a quarter of a century or more.

The master of Hasselden was safe, but the terrible crime weighed upon his mind like lead; a constant fear assailed him that the body might be found, and goaded beyond endurance, on the night after the perpetration of the crime, he visited the scene of the tragedy. He must again examine the spot, discover, if possible, why trace that might lead to the detection.

Murray, going his late rounds, looked up in astonishment as his employer entered the labeling room, carrying a lantern.

"Have you found any clew?" were his words to the astonished watchman, who wondered at the distraught manner of the speaker, and at the unusual hour of his face.

"Nothing, sir—don't expect to. If I thought she was here I'd throw up my job, but it is sheer nonsense, sir. I saw her leave the mill with my own eyes, with me before ten o'clock—I am sure of that."

"Quite sure that I was no idea she is here, but still, I would like to go through the labeling room again. Tell you what, Murray, I suspect that she may have destroyed her own life; it is possible that she may have become conscious—suicides frequently do that, you know."

The room was searched in vain for the third time, under the bright rays of the gas jets turned on full, but their quest was not a clew remained, not a scrap of paper, not a piece of anything that told that beautiful head had lain, and with a shudder, Littlefield descended the stairs, two flights, to the office.

With a bow to his employer, Murray turned into the watchman's room, leaving him standing in the smaller compartment of the first floor devoted to the spoolers.

The single jet at the extremity of the room burned faintly, and Littlefield was about to pass out of the building when a slender figure glided from the shadows, a gray, shadowy form, gliding swiftly toward him.

Horror-stricken, he stood as if glued to the spot, his form convulsively quivering, his teeth chattering like castanets.

With soundless tread the figure glided on, on, so near that the folds of dress touched it with an outstretched hand, but shrinking as if contact with the fluffy seeming to turn to ice in his veins. He strove to cry out, to utter a shriek, but the words congealed on his lips.

The face was turned full toward him, the death-white face of his victim, the dark eyes meeting his own with not a ray of life in their glassy depths, and clothed in the gray, shadowy form, gliding swiftly toward him.

Horror-stricken, he stood as if glued to the spot, his form convulsively quivering, his teeth chattering like castanets.

With soundless tread the figure glided on, on, so near that the folds of dress touched it with an outstretched hand, but shrinking as if contact with the fluffy seeming to turn to ice in his veins. He strove to cry out, to utter a shriek, but the words congealed on his lips.

The face was turned full toward him, the death-white face of his victim, the dark eyes meeting his own with not a ray of life in their glassy depths, and clothed in the dead face.

With a groan, at last wrung from the depths of his tortured heart, he covered his shrinking face with his hands.

When he again dared to look up and glance fearfully about, he was alone—the specter had vanished.

CHAPTER VIII.

A THREAD OF DESTINY.

"Horace Littlefield! The last man on earth I expected to find in my busy season. Glad to meet you all the same, but, man, you're looking like a ghost. What's the matter?"

James Dunbar, M. D., shook hands with his visitor, and looked at him.

"Nothing special, I imagine. I've overworked myself and my wife is shaky, I determined to make a trip to New York and quarter myself upon my old college friend, the doctor, but I couldn't leave the factory to run myself."

"I'll fix you up; a couple of weeks away from business, and judicious medicine will do you good. Where is there you, I fancy?"

"Uncle is dead, and the entire responsibility rests on me."

"Dead? It must have been a shock to you, for you seemed to be a favorite. How was the matter? I was under the impression that he was a hale, hearty fellow for him, that he was a man in robust health."

Horace explained the circumstance, as unadorned as Hasselden.

"A stroke of apoplexy, doubtless," commented the doctor, "and so they may even be left other claimants?"

"Not unless my obscure I assure you; it's no end of trouble and worry; the owner of such a property has a life of care."

"What is the trouble? You have plenty of capital."

"There's a strike on, and there are some ugly customers in the crowd. I'm likely as not to be shot from behind a fence some day."

"Little fear of any law-abiding citizens carrying out their threats, they may grumble and remonstrate, but I've no idea that they would shoot you."

"There's no accounting for the excesses such a rabble may be guilty of," returned Horace, moodily.

"Strikes appear to be epidemic; you are no worse misfortune has found his quarter negative kind of consolation, but I notice that they are settled in most cases, by a reduction of wages, which the working class can ill afford in these times. Better pay and shorter hours is the cry, higher and higher," replied Doctor Dunbar. "Keep your temper, old boy, don't worry, and there'll be no strike."

"But I do worry, and that's the point. I cannot compete with other concerns who have already cut wages; don't you see?"

"And you have made a reduction, eh?"

"I was obliged to. Those people have no idea of anything above their pay, regardless whether their employers get to the dogs that's what is making so many failures. Uncle didn't make half what he should. He wouldn't bear to a reduction, and that is what has got the help down on me, just because I don't follow in his tracks."

"Nevertheless, if you don't make anything, you won't lose; times will mend, and I judge, by what you have always told me, that the Hasselden millions will bear a strain without danger of a break."

"I'm not running a charity concern. It is every man's duty to look out for himself. I fancy if you were required to attend your patients at reduced fees you would object."

"On the contrary, I have a score of patients who are unable to pay me a cent, and I attend them with just as much care as if they were of my wealthy patrons. He who loaneth to the poor lendeth to the Lord."

"Ah, well, Jim, you were always of a philanthropic turn, but philanthropy don't pay in the long run."

"You surely should be thankful your lot had fallen in fortunate paths. Your bachelor uncle has left you an enormous fortune, which, if you don't make wisely—"

"Bachelor uncle? Ha! ha! What put such an idea in your head?"

"I suppose it is because you never mentioned a family, and always spoke of the bachelor's hall at Hasselden; remember, I know nothing of your relatives."

"Uncle was a bachelor, and we didn't care to speak often of his misfortune. He married happily, but in a few months his wife left him, leaving a note, declaring that she would never return. Uncle offered rewards for information concerning her, but not a word has been heard from the missing woman to this day. She disappeared, Uncle Cliff believed that she had committed suicide, but as a result of insanity. He was certain that Emeline was dead, else she would have returned."

The clinkle of a bell interrupted the conversation.

"Excuse me, there's a call; my office hours, you know," and Doctor Dunbar opened a door communicating with his outer office and left his guest to while away an hour as best he might.

A dozen patients of the poorer class claimed his attention, but the physician was strangely absorbed. Some problem occupied his brain.

"Don't see what has come over the doctor," wheezed a heavily-built man, who was suffering from an asthmatic attack. "Generally ain't as sociable as common."

"Hadn't had his dinner, most likely," said a thin, sallow-faced woman.

"Men are mostly out o' sorts when they're hungry."

"I must pull myself together, else I might compound some dangerous prescription," muttered the doctor, as he carefully prepared the powders and wrote directions, and passed them upon vials and envelopes.

It was two hours before he entered his private office, where he found his guest stretched at length upon the sofa, smoking a Havana.

"Your hour was rather lengthened out," complained Horace. "I should think you would get tired of this everlasting drudgery. I should die of weariness. No wonder physicians wear out early."

"The routine of a doctor's life. My father practiced here forty years, and survived for ten—he lived to the good old age of eighty-six."

"It's a wonder; I should die of the monotony," replied Horace.

"I think we will go to dinner. I am going to knock off for tonight, and have made arrangements with Doctor Brown to make my calls."

"Not on my account, Jim; don't let me interfere with your business."

"Not at all; I am feeling rather seedy, and am going to attend a seance, or whatever you may call it. You know I always had a leaning for the occult. Will you come,

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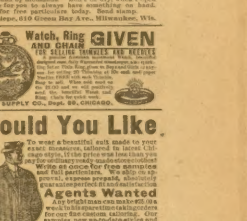

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The Invisible Bride.

(Continued from page three.)

trance a swish of garments and a woman emerged from the area.

A taxicab had just halted at the curb and the lady, sweeping forward, sprang inside. For an instant I caught sight of her face, and almost uttered a cry. It was the same face I had seen in the doorway of room 445.

The taxicab rolled away and I sprang toward a cab which had just followed it to the curb.

"Engaged?" I asked.

"No, cap'n."

As I leaped inside I glanced up at the man on the box.

"You see the 'tax' that has just left here? Keep it in sight. It's a double fare if you do."

"I never fail to catch 'em, cap'n," and with this I was rolled away.

For twenty minutes the vehicle jolted over the stones like mad. It was impossible to tell whither I was being taken.

"It's turned into Broadway," said the man.

"Follow it to Hell Gate if necessary," I replied.

On, on we went. Once the swaying thing seemed to topple and threaten to turn over, but it righted again and the same mad course was kept up.

"Is it in sight yet?" I asked anxiously.

"Always in sight, cap'n."

"Don't lose it."

At last the "tax" slowed up and the man in the box leaned toward my white and anxious face.

"It's stopping, cap'n," said he.

"Where?"

"In Golden Alley, just turned into the place."

"Not in that quarter of the town?"

"Mebbe it'll go through to Taylor street. It's a short cut to Taylor. We might go round—"

"No!" and I sprang from the vehicle.

Down the narrow way I caught sight of a taxicab. It was moving slowly and while I gazed it turned to the left and came to a standstill.

"Here," said I, tossing the man on the box the promised double fare, which he took with a chuckle. "I'll take care of myself now."

"It's a bad place, cap'n," said he.

"I know the city, sir," I answered tartly.

"It's funny," persisted the man. "It's what you might call a coincidence. You're the second person I've brought down here tonight."

"What's that?" I went up to the vehicle and looked into the speaker's face.

"It's a fact, cap'n, and he started from the 'Clarendon,' too."

"Who did?"

"The man I brought down here."

"What was he like?"

"A man of sixty, I would think, stout and rather distinguished looking. He had the scads, I tell you, cap'n."

I did not wait to hear more, for the taxicab we had followed had managed to turn round in Golden Alley and was coming back.

The man who had brought me to the spot whirled his cab and moved off while I hugged one of the nearest walls, contracting my body into the smallest possible space as I kept an eye on the advancing "tax."

It passed me without my being seen by the lynx-eyed man in his place and debouched into the broader street. In another moment both cabs had disappeared.

I started from my wall and went deeper into the darkish place. The tenant of room 445 had vanished somewhere in Golden Alley—the woman with the face of the dead.

For a few steps I advanced boldly, when suddenly a door opened across the alley and I caught the glitter of a light. That was not all. I saw once more the face I had encountered in the hotel.

I seemed for a moment rooted to the spot with astonishment. It surely was the same face, beautiful but very white, with a mass of dark hair framing it.

Almost instantly the door closed and the face vanished.

I was on the opposite side of the alley in a minute. I saw before me the outlines of a frame house, not very prepossessing, but better than its neighbors.

While I gazed at the structure a man came running down the alley and, upon catching sight of me, drew off and uttered a shrill cry.

"What are you doing here?" he demanded, shooting a hard glance in my direction. "You don't belong to the Owls?"

"No, do you?"

He came closer and bent his body forward, gazing with great intentness into my face.

"Who lives there?" I asked, pointing to the strange house.

"Go in and see," he laughed.

"But you know?"

"It's the Web, that's what it is. Did the Spider enter?"

"I don't know. Who is the Spider?"

"Goldrocks. But tell me. What makes you want to know who's in the Web?"

I could feel the breath of the burly ruffian in my face. His eyes snapped from beneath their shaggy brows like forked lightnings. I saw his hands like sledge hammers, clenched till the muscles stood out like whip-cords.

"You want in the Web, eh?" he hissed. "By heavens! you shall see the Spider and the pretty golden Fly."

The next instant, before I could even anticipate, something struck me in the face and I became dead to the world.

The continuation of this thrilling story will be found in the Ledger's issue of next week. If you are not a regular subscriber to the Ledger we would like to have your name on our list. The Ledger is only $1.00 per year; it is worth many times that amount. Send in your subscription, for many great stories that you cannot afford to miss will appear during the coming months.

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"Johnny," said the old farmer in a coaxing voice, "you know I believe in encouraging sports?"

"Yes, pa," responded Johnny, eagerly.

"Well, after you have milked the six cows, fed the stock and cut the wood I'll let you and Zeke have a snow-shoveling Marathon between the house and the barn and the pump and the gate. There ain't no mean bones in my body."

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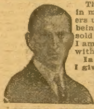

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A DISPARAGING WIFE.

My friend is a very plain, homespun sort of man, who takes matter of fact views of things, and entertains common-sense opinions. Yet he is a man of taste—proud, sensitive, and particular—though not by any means a grumbler or fault finder.

He is a professional man, dresses well, attends to his business, makes a good living, and something over besides, and has everything around him comfortable and in order.

He passed the meridian of his life some years since. His locks are gray, his head is bald, but his step is yet firm, and a countenance rather stern in repose is usually lighted up with a smile, while the hearty laugh that anon breaks out reveals a remarkably fine set of teeth—but I would not like to say whether they are natural or artificial.

The members of his family have all reached maturity, and it would seem that he might feel very contented and happy in his own snug little home, free from want, and as free from care as an earthly home well can be.

Yet my friend is not quite happy; he has a skeleton in his house—rather airy or ghostlike, I must confess, but nevertheless a skeleton—a veritable cause of sadness, if not sorrow. It might not be such to you or me, dear reader, but it is to him.

"My wife," says he, "is one of the strangest women I ever saw. She never can see any beauty or merit in anything that she possesses, or that surrounds her in her own home."

"Perhaps that is only an expression of her natural modesty and lack of self-esteem," I suggested.

"No, that is not it," replied he. "It is her disposition to depreciate everything she has, while she overestimates and goes into ecstacies over everything she sees her neighbors have."

"That may be," I added, "owing to the fact that she is familiar with the defects of the articles she uses and sees every day, while she is not cognizant of the deficiencies of those possessed by her neighbors. But it is unfortunate, if it makes her dissatisfied and complaining."

"Oh, she never complains or finds fault; nor does she ever indulge in expressions of satisfaction, or act as if she felt contented and happy. I have tried time and again to carry home something that would surprise and please her, and awaken some exclamation of admiration and enthusiasm. But it is of no use. All my efforts fall dead."

That is rather discouraging," I answered.

"Yes," continued he. "To illustrate, I will give an incident or two. She had a good hat—good enough for most women to wear; but I thought I would surprise and please her a little. So I bought her a fine black silk velvet hat—as nice as I could find—richly but not gaudily trimmed. I would not have it sent home—I carried the box myself. I wanted to enjoy the pleasant surprise. I walked triumphantly into the sitting room with it and placed it on the table before her.

"She opened it and examined the hat, picked at the feathers, inspected the lace, and every article of trimming, not excepting the material. I felt sure all must be right, and I waited for a word. But no word came, and she quietly laid the hat in the box and put on the cover. I began to feel a little fidgety.

"'Well,' said I, 'how do you like it?'

"'Oh,' she replied, resuming her sewing, 'It is very nice; but you ought to see Mrs. Jones' velvet hat—royal purple, and such a beauty!'

"It was all up with me. My heart figuratively sank into my boots, and I actually felt weak in the knees as I left the room."

He paused for a moment, and a shade of deep melancholy settled over his countenance. I said nothing, and there was a pause of half a minute. Then, seeming to recollect himself, he looked up, the muscles of his face relaxed, and he indulged in a kind of forced laugh.

"Did you ever notice Mrs. Jones' hat?" inquired I.

"Yes; and, upon my word, it was not half so good-looking nor expensive a hat as I carried home. But I never broached the subject again to my wife.'

"Shortly after," he continued, "when I had in a measure recovered from the shock, I made up my mind to purchase for my wife a black silk velvet cloak. I did not count cost. I searched till I found one that suited me, and which I thought would suit her. I ordered it sent home, and was sure to be there when it was delivered. I was certain this time I should make a hit, as I had heard her express a desire for just such a cloak. But I was again doomed to disappointment. Mrs. Smith had one—a green, or a blue, or some other inappropriate color—that was a great way ahead of it. It was of no use; I have subsided, and given up all hope of pleasing her."

"Perhaps you would succeed better if you would allow her to select these things?" queried I.

"No. I believe I have tried to have her do that, but she insists on my picking and choosing for her, though I have never yet succeeded in making her say she was pleased with my purchases.

"And it is just so," continued he, "about my house and furniture. She never finds fault, and she never approves. She is a bundle of silent negatives. We visited a neighbor's the other day, and she was in raptures about the furniture, the finish of the house, and everything about it. Yet I knew all the time everything in that house was greatly inferior to mine in almost every particular. It was neither so costly, so tasty, nor so elegant. But what is the use? Some people never can appreciate their own possessions!"

And my friend again lapsed into a profound melancholy. I sympathized with him, but I could suggest no remedy; so I thought I would put his case in print and submit it to the ladies. Can you not in some way drive this skeleton out of his house?

The Marriageable Age.

At what age do the majority of men find that perfection in women which influences men to marry them? We speak in this instance of the majority of men, who are neither brainless nonentities—fools of twenty nor men two-score-and-ten, embittered and cynical, who have no appreciation of the ennobling influences of true and beautiful girlhood and the gentle and hallowed sweetness of womanhood.

This question, "at what age women are too young or too old to be considered marriageable," has long been a theme for spirited discussion.

One gentleman—a well-known bachelor, who has just inherited a large fortune, in addition to a profitable business—when appealed to on the subject the other day, said with a smile:

"The topic is open to such an amount of discussion, I really feel that I would be getting into deep water were I to attempt to gauge it with any views of mine.

"As for myself—well, who is not ready to admire the candor and beauty of the debutante?

"They are always delightful—charming, yet I should not care to ask one of them to be my wife, for the reason that I consider the match would not be altogether a happy one.

"Few men can keep up long to the standard required to dance attendance upon a gay will-o'-the-wisp of sweet eighteen.

"The girl of the period, of two-and-twenty, we will say, imagines herself a social queen, and rules it right royally over us poor men.

"She is quite confident she could get any one, and that men are to bow down to her if she deigns them a glance or a smile. No, they are too self-conscious at that age by a thousand per cent.

"At twenty-six I find them infinitely more sensible, if I may be permitted to use that expression. They require less compliments and flowery talk, and this is a relief to most men.

"At thirty women are at the zenith of their attractions, physically and mentally. They are the full-blown and perfect roses, wherein possession is positively delightful.

"At thirty-five, if women have not become too much soured by 'hope deferred,' men find in them that perfect repose, that magnetism and comfort which the wisest most appreciate, and companionship with them brings a man those elysian dreams of what a home and his own fireside would be like. Just such a thing is the bright star of hope about which those dreams cluster until they find fruition in reality.

"But I have a partner," he added, after a moment's pause, "with whom this very subject is a sort of hobby. 'Age and maturity brings wisdom,' he is wont to remark; 'and of all things in the world that a man doesn't want, it is a wife who knows too much. He wants to be the oak—she must be the clinging vine to be guided by him. He does not want a dictator of affairs in his wife.'

"My partner has just chosen for a bride a remarkably pretty country girl of seventeen, and he seems quite satisfied."

But another, a handsome lawyer, says, and says it with charming gallantry:

"Women, Heaven bless them! are always lovable at any stage and at any age. I am lost in wonderful admiration of the sweet girl at eighteen; I am enraptured with the fair maid of twenty-two; I adore the beauteous angel of twenty-six; I am the abject slave of the capricious, dangerously fascinating being of thirty, and I am in 'Heaven upon earth' when one who is a queen among women, the fairest of all the fair women on earth to me—and she is thirty-four—gives me her little white hand in greeting, for on that slim white hand shines my engagement ring." Another, a well known banker, says tersely:

"If I fell in love with a woman, and she could be persuaded into taking me, were she eighteen or fifty-one, I would marry her. Age does not count in the rule of love and marriage. In selecting a wife, every man should go according to his own judgment, without prejudices, and simply search for the heart that beats responsive to his own."

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CHAPTER XIII.

AT GREAT RISK.

WE LOOKED hard, resting on our oars and wholly silent for a time. The cove was perhaps forty fathoms from side to side, with cliffs round and depths about equal, and at its north side rocked the vessel, the light showed and no sound was to be heard.

The hull was in inky blotch against a background, but a shade lighter, while the masts stood outlined against the sky, their taper broken by bulges that told of sails furled and stowed.

No man hailed from her deck, and no moving spot told of a crew.

"Another vessel in this far land!" muttered Jerry Whitebone, suddenly plunged into wonder. "After a hundred years, two together—"

"Don't you know what she is?"

"No, sir."

I ran my eye over hull, deck and masts again.

"It is almost certain she's a derelict, but I'll hail." This said, I called out clearly: "Ahoy, the ship! Deck ahoy!"

There was no reply, and only the chuckling of the water her bow broke as it was driven to land, broke the stillness.

"It is a real ship!" cried Gretchen nervously. "May it not be a witch-gift?"

"Not unless it's a fighting," replied. "It is simply a deserted craft, Jerry, man, we are interested in this. A second ship at our disposal. We do not need her, but we do us great good. Pull to her side and I'll board her."

"But if it be a witch-gift?" remonstrated the girl, shrinking from me.

I once more tried to calm her, but even Jerry was nervous, and I had to repeat my orders before he dipped his oars. When he summoned courage, a few strokes took us under her counter, where a dangling line offered ready help in my enterprise. I climbed with a quick knack and instantly stood on her deck. I hailed again, both from where I stood and, later, at the hatches, but no man uttered winds her.

Announcing that she was really a derelict, I set out to get a light, and had gone only a few paces when I stumbled over a lantern. Luckily it was not broken, and I soon had it alight. Almost the first thing I saw after that was a pool of blood on the deck, and I knew it was the scene of some dark tragedy. Giving scant heed to it, I went exploring.

The craft was a schooner of something like a hundred tons burden. Sharp at her bows and of fine lines in all parts. Every sail was furled, but, as afterward found, so snugly stowed as to suggest haste. The canvas folded in loose lumps, rather suggesting that when a half-gale wind would have blown out the bunts.

Next, I saw what was not found all but men. In a word, nobody was there of the crew, the boats were gone, the anchors were stowed, no dismasted spars floating at her own will and the mercy of the waves. Throwing a loose bit of sail over the blood-spot I leaned on the rail and reported to Jerry.

"Mate," I added, "we want this lump of a lime."

"The more I think of it, the more I believe it, sir," he replied.

"Can we bring her near the village?"

"Why, yes, sir, in Pocket Cove."

"What is that?"

"A place much like this, only hemmed in with great trees."

"How near the houses?"

"Maybe half a mile."

"Would not her masts show there?"

"Oh! no, sir. The cove is in a hillside, and a place nobody ever gave to, you see. Fetch her there, haul her under the great trees and I'll have her anchor with a proper length of cable and she would lie there almost as hidden as a man in his coffin. The trails are in place, I see."

"Yes. Loosen the gaskets and pull a bit at the halyards, and so on, and we two could get her under way. What air we have is off the land, and by the look over yonder I think it will freshen soon. The drive we can take her out of the cove without towing, and we can easily get a quartering breeze for a run up the coast."

"Fine, sir! Once we have this hooker we can laugh at Mynheer Opsoomer. Let him bullyrag if he will; he can't leave us marooned if he does steal the Cousin Polly."

"There you have it, Jerry. Now we will make ready—"

"But Tony Mossett!" cried Gretchen suddenly.

"The deuce!" I exclaimed. "I had forgotten our other task. That comes first. I'll join you directly."

Straightening up I looked at deck, masts, shore and sky, debating how to secure our prize. I ended by calling Jerry to my side.

"We want her here when we come again," I explained. "If we leave her as she is she will drift to sea, and maybe we shall fail to find her again. For several reasons I dare not quit the anchor ago. Now, with only this capful of wind she will pull with a baby's strength, and no more. I want to carry a line outboard and make fast to yonder tree. Until then we become a common yoke will serve as well as a cable. How does it strike you?"

"It will work unless the breeze stiffens, but if it springs up sudden she will part her hawsers."

"We'll chance that. We are but two, and must act accordingly. We will carry the rope ashore."

That I wanted was not hard to find, and it proved to be a bit of hemp so near new that it was hardly browned. In a few minutes I had it coiled and ready for professional restraint, and our work was done.

"How do you like her, Jerry?" asked Jerry.

I scent a mutiny, violence, bloodshed and crime. Let that go by, for we can only pick up our own troubles. To the boat!"

We went, and Jerry fell to at the oars again. It was hard to get the Mary Ann Cousin Polly, but my companions were wrapped up in the forthcoming adventure, and after about half an hour's farther Gretchen managed to bring me out of my abstraction.

"Do you see yonder headland?" she asked.

"Ay," I returned.

"The pirate ship is there. Pull to the shore, Jerry."

Jerry so agreed. "We must hide short of there, for sight of the boat will upset all our plans. That's a tangled place, mist."

La Jumbie of Jumbies! I had not thought of it. I did not know where the cave is, our venture would be hopeless. If it is, the jumbi will help us."

Gretchen shot the spot sharply and began to feel misgivings. It was no trifling matter to dare all those men who followed Mossett. After that they could relieve the boat-crowd land, and I caught at a bush and held fast, after which Jerry pulled us fast with the painter.

"Now, Jerry," I said, turning to Gretchen, "that you will be very silent while we are away."

"I go, too!" she quickly exclaimed.

"But the danger—"

"Does not worry me. Even if it did I must go where you go. I know where the entrance to the cave is, so only I can guide you."

"It seems a cruel thing to expose you to this peril—"

"Am I less brave than you?"

"Frankly, I don't think you are, miss. Well, have it your own way. Keep close by your side. Ready?"

"Ready!" they responded in unison.

With this Gretchen slipped away like a dark shadow, and we had to stir our legs to keep with her. A few steps took us into total darkness, the treetops meeting over our heads and shutting out all light. The fair guide, however, seemed to have no difficulty, and we had only to tread after her. A hundred yards we went, and then she stopped.

"Hush!" she cautioned.

"Do you see anybody?" I asked.

"No, but I think you see the mouth of the cave?"

"I see a black gap."

"It is the place. Now it only remains to go in and learn just where Tony Mossett is. If he is still asleep we must wait quietly and lies down, but it is hardly likely these men sit up late. Wait until I have looked the interior over."

She started, but I caught her arm.

"It is not for you to go, but the work for me."

"Do you know the cave, captain?"

"Do you?"

"Indeed, yes. I looked it over well a few days ago. Oh! believe me, sir, this is no guess-work, nor can anybody act but me."

"But I will go with you—"

"No!" she exclaimed imperiously. "I'll not be bothered by one who is ignorant of the turns and passages. I go alone. Keep back, or I will give my help to you no longer."

With a wave of her hand she was gone. The black gap seemed to swallow her up, and then Jerry and I were alone.

It was a miserable moment for me. She had proved her courage, and I admired her more than ever, but I was a feeling with a sting. It seemed to me that I was a miserable coward to turn safe outside while she risked so much, but her manner had been too commanding to be disobeyed. For weal or woe we were in for it, and she was the heroine of the venture. She was in the hiding place of the pirates, and alone. She looked as imposing to my fancy as I seemed small and mean. Only the memory of her imperious tone kept me from rushing to join her, but Jerry manifested no desire to enter.

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"They will discover her!" he whispered, a quaver in his voice.

I set my finger-nails hard in my hands and said nothing.

"And his friends are like birds of prey," my mate went on. "She can't escape their notice."

I reached out and grasped his arm fiercely. "Be still!" I whispered. "Somebody is near!"

It was so. I had heard a footfall almost at our backs, and only a few steps distant.

CHAPTER XIV.

FIGHTING OUR WAY.

I heard my heart thumping heavily, but not from personal fear. Being a sailor I was used to rough events, and ready to wrestle with what might come. But Gretchen—she was in the cave, and the newcomers were headed that way.

Just when it seemed she must be quickly discovered, the men halted. Had I carried a boarding-pike I might have reached out and touched them as they stood. Now they spoke.

"I will go no farther now. I have seen enough to be able to find you when I want to come again. I will remember the signal you have taught me, so always listen for it. Bear in mind that you and your men will be restored to favor if you can aid us to baffle the captain with black hair and blue eyes."

I knew that voice. It was that of Patroon Opsoomer, and the reply came in tones as clearly those of Tony Mossett.

"Come any time you will, mynheer. We will be listening for the signal, and we will pop out of the cave instantly."

"Then you say you are sure you can navigate the vessel if Captain Stanford is left behind when we sail?"

"Surely, mynheer. True, we shall be shorthanded, for there will be only Whitebone, Straw and Carr to aid me, and the last two will have to be compelled at the muzzle of a pistol, maybe, but they will help to save their lives. Four able seamen, you see, and plenty of the passengers to learn the art gradually. Even a green hand can pull at a rope."

"Mynheer Ingenhouse has raised another point. Suppose a big storm comes—can four of you work the ship?"

"Easily!" returned Tony, with the sheerity of a man who wishes to convey his point with or without the color of truth. "There is no great trick in handling a ship once one has the sails set and her head right."

He lied fluently, but Opsoomer could not know it. The patroon uttered suddenly:

"So be it, then. We will carry out the plan. We'll row as capitain, and will go in the ship save Stanford. We will leave him behind. He is welcome to our village, our fields and the like, and the great cold is not likely to settle fully over this land during his residence. At least, perhaps not."

With this the old rascal added a word or two and went his way, dropped back into the deep shadows from which the two men had taken their rise. I let him have time to use for him, but I saw how pitiless he was, how he had doomed me to the exile he longed to escape, and what the plot was. Because of an idle superstition the pirates were to be left on high land. I might be marooned.

Jerry reached out at this moment and touched my arm, but I gave him no heed. The shock of the interview had stunned my mind. We wanted to seize Tony Mossett, and he was by our side. Everything was as he wished. It was unnecessary to get him without his sending an alarm to his fellows.

He stood looking after the patroon briefly and then took a step toward his lair. I was ready for him. Carefully-poised, I threw myself heavily upon him, swinging my right arm around his body, and clutching at his throat with my free hand.

Alertness and muscle met me, and the pirate bounded like an animal, broke away off all outcry and bent him relentlessly over my knee. There was a struggle in it, for I had never liked the man, and I remembered the cruel way he had set by Gretchen on my bed in Vanderdecken's house. Alone, I might have found it hard to shut off alarm, and then my friend Jerry was as active as I could wish. Acting together, we flung the fellow down, gagged him, using the cords brought with us for that purpose. Things for all was well, but victorious, we still had a check to the instant departure so necessary for our safety. Gretchen was not with us.

Leaving Jerry to guard the prisoner I went to the mouth of the cave. No sound came from that quarter. I dared not call to Vanderdecken's daughter, and I dared not wait.

I decided to go after her promptly.

Pushing ahead I moved down the rocky walls, feeling my way in total darkness, now and then to listen, and then resuming my course. A hundred feet I traveled in this style, and then a turn in the avenue gave me sudden view of a light and of men. It was only a small lamp, but it showed a group leaning together, and the figure that meant no more to me than that they were undoubtedly the other pirates. While I lingered, looking in curiosity, something cold touched my temple as soft but imperative voice sounded by my side.

"Be still!" was its command. "Cry out, or move, and you are a dead man!"

I started a bit, then realized the situation and smiled in the gloom of the narrow way.

"I yield!" I replied. "Don't shoot, Miss Gretchen, for I am not Tony, but Nat Stanford."

"Oh!" she exclaimed. "I'm glad I did not harm one but I intended to have my own way. Captain, I don't see Mossett here, and I've been here an hour."

"He is outside, and my prisoner. Jerry watches over him. Come—our work is done, so let us go quickly."

She comprehended readily and we beat a retreat. I was glad she had used the pistol so little, for she had never handled one until that day, although an apt pupil, she might have done damage.

We were outside without delay, and after a minute's consultation Jerry and I picked our prisoner up as if he had been a log. He writhed a trifle, but we ignored this and hastened on, fearing we might meet others of the gang. Regaining the boat we stowed Tony under a thwart, after which Jerry fell to at the oars and we made all possible way up the coast. No words were exchanged, for we were intent on weighty thoughts.

Presently, as we were looking for the cove where the schooner had been left, we abruptly sighted a black hulk dead ahead.

FROM FACTORY TO HOME

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You pay no unreasonable middlemen's profits when you buy your home furnishings from us. We have no extravagant selling plans—no jobbers—no salesmen—no agents—no dealers. We buy and sell direct. Our twenty-five large stores and branch offices in the heart of the principal cities of this country—our enormous mail order business amounting to millions of dollars each year—and our $7,000,000.00 capital, which enables us to buy for cash the enormous quantities of goods we use, gives us buying powers greater than any other concern in America. Offers we contract for entire factory outputs in bring the prices down—and everything is sold from factory direct to you at even less than what dealers can buy for.

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Send For Our Big Free Catalog—Today

So fill out this coupon now and get our new 1910 catalog. From cover to cover it's filled with rare bargains, such as you see shown in this advertisement. It pictures over 3,000 things for the home—some in their natural colors. It tells how you can afford the best for your home without the slightest inconvenience. You owe it to yourself and family to at least see what really offers you. Act at once.

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Gentlemen:—Please send me your new 1910 catalog and quote prices on the following goods, and your free catalog please. Ship 2300 things for me.

Name.....

Address.....

Town..... State.....

You may also send me your ..... Stove Catalog. Grocery Catalog.
I have checked the one I want.

A bulk Jerry and I saw at once was a vessel, and he lifted his oars and let the boat drift.

"Can it be the Cousin Polly?" he asked nervously.

"She likely it's the Mary of Salem. Surely there is not a fleet hereabouts, so my opinion is that the schooner has parted her line and gone adrift. I mind now that the breeze has freshened. She's aboard."

"Ay, ay, sir, you're right; that is the schooner. Well, since she has taken the water with her own impulse, it is the part of wonder."

Once more he pulled, and soon we were alongside. There was only a moderate breeze, while the schooner was still so close by the headland that she was half-blanketed, so she had little motion on, making our task easy. The line that held her ashore was still dangling, and the boat was made fast. Then Jerry and I clambered to the deck, Gretchen was handed over the rail, and then we swung Mossett up. He growled indistinctly as we did it, but the gag baffled anything further, and we plumped him down on the deck.

"Now fetch this craft to Pocket Cove," I exclaimed. "Lucky the Cousin Polly saved us things as they did. We will hoist enough canvas to give her steerageway, and make our run quickly.

"We can do it," Jerry replied.

"I hope so. But it will be a child's-play to make the cove."

"How I think of it, the regular drift serves, sir. Many a time I've had a pikarro go before when I didn't want to go, without the current, and it will take the schooner now."

"Are you sure the tide will not prevent?"

"Dead sure!"

"If it's as you say, our only fear is that we may drive her aground when we fetch to the cove."

"You will find only a gentle drift."

All this was encouraging, and we set to work in earnest. Gretchen and Mossett we got her under way, and then run up the cousin. Jerry had the wheel, and all his claims proved to be well founded. In a word we brought the Mary of Salem safely through the setting her drift at that point, and, anubbing her easily, the worst was over.

We found the anchors unusually heavy, and, reluctant to disturb what might be left to weigh later, we decided to trust again to other means, though with an impatient oath. We found a suitable cable outboard on either beam, making fast to stout trees, and had the schooner fixed to our satisfaction. No reef was at hand, the headland was a protection against dangerous land winds, and we thought her likely to await our pleasure for some time to come.

Next I went below, fell my way until I found the hanging cabin lamp, lighted up, and then we carried Mossett to that quarter. While I held my pistol Jerry relieved the prisoner of his gag. He sat up and fixed his slittering eyes upon me. The deep hate and anger he expressed, told its tale, but did not affect me.

"Well," said I, "you sold yourself to Hugo Opsoomer to make war upon me. Now, how do you like it?"

"If I had you Yet!" he grated, his cramped jaws working clumsily.

"How will you do it?" I asked coolly.

"Do you think you can beat all of Opsoomer's people?"

"I can try."

"Conceited as ever! You always were a stuck-up jackanapes when I was shipmate with you."

"Your modesty, then, makes me wonder that you say so now," I drily returned. "Mossett, you will never sail the Cousin Polly away from this land."

"Nor will you, by perdition!"

"You are my prisoner, and here you stay. Opsoomer's people are gone. Just what is to become of you I don't know, but your fate is certain."

"I'll have you yet!" he repeated viciously, "not while you are prisoner in this craft."

He stared about him in curiosity.

"I'd like to know what old hulk you've got here. It is not the Cousin Polly, so what the blazes is she? How did this craft get into this latitude? I had known she was here—"

"Not so!" I replied, as he fell silent, cleverly struck with strong regrets. "But you didn't know. Now, Tony, as you have muddled with what was no concern of yours, and made war upon me, you will take the consequences. I'm free to act as I see best, but you will remain under restraint. Bonds and gags are the order."

At this he grew furious and expressed himself ruinously for me, for it never would do to have his voice booming out in warning. I had plotted only safety up to this hour. Heedless of his rage, we carried out my plan.

We returned to the deck, where I stood looking about me.

"This craft is small," I remarked, "and the trees hang well over the water, but I think we have the schooner under our discovery. The high point is a shield-landward, but if a boat passes near, its crew must see her rocking here."

"I do not fear," replied Gretchen. "Boating is meant for the other side of the land, and I hope for the best."

So did I, but I tried to bolster up my hopes. We left the Mary to herself and made our way back to the village. What I feared the final outcome might be we had struck for ourselves, and my gratitude went forth to the fair companion of my adventure. Her courage had been the bulwark of our defense, and she was surely a good ally to have.

More than all else, we had struck our first blow, and I did not intend it should be the last. Patroon Opsoomer would find that I was not easy prey. To the natural desire to care for my life and liberty was added the thirst to avenge Gretchen's wrongs. To ruin like to be robbed, and events had made the ship temporarily my property, while all sailors know how a ship stands in the commander's mind. Somebody else may own it, but it is his home, his refuge, his lair of the sea, and he pins his heart to the foremast because the logic of the life renders it so.

Something of this came into my mind as Gretchen and I neared her father's house. Jerry had drifted away to his own quarters, where, as I now knew, he had a wife and child, and my only companion was the Flying Dutchman's daughter. Thinking, I stopped short and looked at the northern headland.

"You have your own vessel in mind," Gretchen said softly.

"Ay, ay, 'tis even so," I replied.

"I believe that you have lied her."

I stood silent, still gazing at the headland, but the house at my back had no magnetic power then. Again she read my thoughts.

"Do you want to see her from the high land?"

"That is what is in my mind, miss. Although we have had the Mary of Salem and she's a tidy craft, my old hooker calls to me. I do want to see her. I'll go, if the bidding you good night—"

She left the girl returned quickly. "Not yet. I'll go with you. You are my guest, and—and I am strangely attracted by that great ship. I'll go with you."

She set the example, and I could not refuse her without giving offense. Naturally, I felt like sending her back. A wild longing for stout action had come upon me. The fight was begun, and dallying no longer needful. My mind was full of a risky scheme.

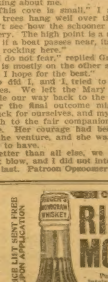
Could I recover the Cousin Polly that night?

CHAPTER XV.

ON A HOSTILE DECK.

We walked on to the foot of the headland,

(Continued on page twelve.)



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Purity and age guarantee Good Whiskey. Rieger's Monogram is absolutely pure and wholesome. Guaranteed by us under the Pure Food Laws. Its exquisite, mellow flavor will please you. Age is what gives it that delicious flavor. Rieger's Monogram is now 4 years old—and you get the benefit of the years we have stored it away. We pay wholesale prices, when you can buy Rieger's Monogram at the regular wholesale dealer's price, and save money by ordering your goods shipped direct.

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Send us an order and when you get the Whiskey, test it for flavor, mellowness and body, the essentials of GOOD Whiskey. Compare it with any Whiskey at the money—then the money when the price is less for the Whiskey. If you are not thoroughly satisfied to satisfy yourself on these points—then if you are not thoroughly convinced that "Rieger's Monogram" is as good or better than any Whiskey you ever drank, return the balance to us and we will pay return charges and all costs and you every cent of your money.

J. RIEGER & CO., 1509 Genesee St., Kansas City, Mo.

Vibrant Nerve Force Supplied to Man.

(From "Man's Maladies.")

Without stamina, man is a failure. What is stamina? It is constitutional vim, vigor, vitality. It is keen, responsive, vibrant nerve force, that gives wonderful inner strength to every muscle and sound body, supports it, and makes it by modern money and keeps friends. It is strong, sensitive nerves make stamina and with it men excel in business, sport, pleasure and social favor. Without it he is apt to be weak willed, weak memoried, inactive in action, with cold hands, cold feet, nervousness, timidity, fear without cause, trembling, melancholy, pain in the back of head, nervesthenia and a general lack of grit, courage and nerve or that it is impossible to act naturally under all circumstances as a man with stamina should.

Astonishing strength, nerve force and poise is quickly restored by the following valuable formula which anyone can prepare in the privacy of home. Coming from a source of unquestioned authority, namely, Dr. Lewis Baker, College E. Bldg., Dayton, Ohio, it is presumed to be infallible: First, obtain three ounces of syrup sarsaparilla compound in a six ounce bottle; add one ounce of compound fluid balmwort, shake well, and let stand two hours. Then add one ounce tincture cadenene compound (not cardamon) and one ounce compound essence cardiol. Mix, shake well and take a teaspoonful after each meal and one when retiring.

The above ingredients, except the syrup, are rare concentrations of purest drugs without opiates and are used for various prescriptions.

Saving Clause.

"Mexico is a pretty warm place, if it not, Mr. Travell?"

"Er—not if you behave yourself."

FREE SCHOLARSHIPS FOR EVERYBODY

ROCHESTER, N. Y., March 26, 1910.—The Directors of Franklin Institute today voted 1000 Scholarships for the next National Correspondence Course. Free of charge. Send postal containing the applicant's name, address and Dept. R 37, is sufficient application.

Consistent.

He—Will you meet me?

She—Can't. I belong to the Anti-Meat Society.

A Chance to Make Money.

Yes, elegant free homesteads can still be had in Mexico where many Americans are now locating. You need not go to Mexico, but are required to have five acres of fruit trees planted within five years. For information address the Jantha Plantation Co., Block 583 Pittsburg, Pa. They will plant and care for your trees on shares, so you should make a thousand dollars a year. It is never hot, never cold. The health conditions are perfect.

April Fool.

"By heck! I'd just like to see anybody April fool me! I'm too smart for 'em, by heck!"

The Honest Proprietary Medicine

has saved thousands of dollars to families who could ill afford the expense necessary to maintain the services of a physician, and has answered the purpose equally as well and often succeeded after our best physicians have failed. Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound is one of this kind.

Some women play bridge in an effort to cross the social stream.

AGENTS WANTED

Rider Agents Wanted

in each town to ride and exhibit sample 1910 Model bicycle. Write for Special Offer. Finest Guaranteed $10 to $27 1910 Models 1909 and Factory-Pair Year Models $7 to $12 All of best makers 100 Second-Hand Models $3 to $8 Good wheels Great FACTORY CLEARING SALE we Ship on Approval without a cent deposit, prepay freight and allow TEN DAYS FREE TRIAL. Coaster brake rear wheels, lamps, parts, sundries, half usual prices. Do not buy a bicycle or get our catalog and offer. Write now. MEAD CYCLE CO., Dept. T-52 Chicago

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200% PROFIT

Agents Coining Money

Thousands being sold. Great seller. Every owner buys. Handy Automatic Motor Washer. Washes clothes perfectly in 2 minutes. Write for Special Offer—no money in it. Agents coining money—write—we show how. Don't delay. Territory going fast. Write today—before tomorrow—before evening—before you turn around. Address H. CHESTER SMITH, 4967 Lovejoy Building, Dayton, Ohio.

AGENTS—$60 A WEEK—Introducing Comfort Wonder. Guaranteed 5 years. Lasts a lifetime. Sells on sight. Write for terms. Comfort Wonder Co., Dept. 1, Cincinnati, O.

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Football.

"Tear into 'em! Tear 'em up! Eat 'em alive, boys! Chew up that line! Eat 'em up!" yells the coach.

"Raw, raw, raw!" yell the boys in the bleachers.

"Mercy!" remarked the lady missionary from Abyssinia. "Is this a cannibal country, too?"

How He Escaped.

The One—What was the result of Miss Dewsweet's suit for breach of promise?

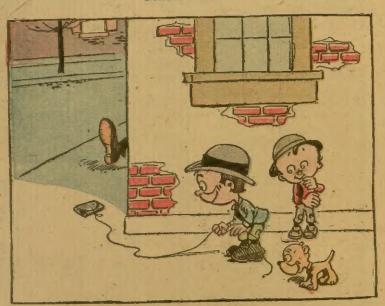
The Other—The young man got off on the plea of temporary insanity.

The One—How did that happen?

The Other—His letters to her were read to the jury.

coonskin can, "you miss him because the last city hunter didn't miss him."

GREAT DAY.



"April fool's day's lots of fun, ain't it?"

"Yep. I wonder why dey don't make it a legal holiday?"

Playing to Empty Seats.

Tragedian—Well, my man, what can I do for you?

Stranger—Please, sir, I come to ask your opinion of the stage as a profession. The manager said you would give me an audience.

Tragedian (looking over gloomy seats with a sigh)—Ye shades of Caesar, if some one would only give me one!

No Hope.

Jack—How are your chances coming on with that stunning blonde?

Dick(gloomily)—I fear there is no hope. I wrote her a letter telling her of my love.

Jack—And didn't she reply?

Dick—Yes; but she closed her letter with: 'I beg to remain—A Bachelor Girl.'

Future Invitations.

Hodge—How are you, old fellow? When you are down my way in your automobile drop in some time.

Dodge—Oh! I travel in an aeroplane these days.

Hodge—That so? Well, drop out some time.

The General Opinion.

Livaway—Is Mr. Wadliter generally liked by the people of your town?

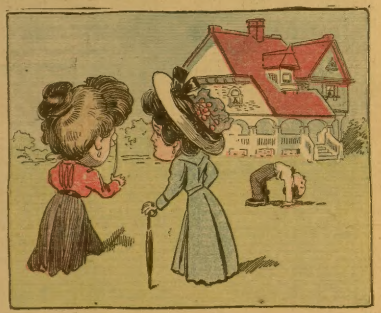
Dwellhar—Well, he is liked to this extent. There isn't a person among us that would sincerely feel like thanking any man who should happen to save Wadliter's life.

Mistaken for a Deer.

"Seems like I miss the old guide," remarked the amateur hunter, reminiscently. "How was that happen?"

"Well," drawled the young guide in the

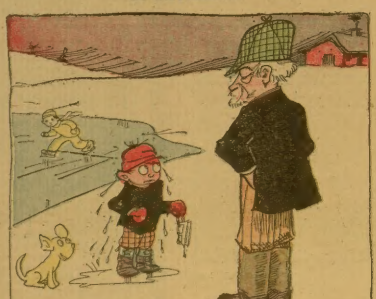
SPRING CLEANING.



Mrs. Smith—Goodness, Mrs. Swift, why is your husband going through all those strange actions? Is he training for a prize fight?

Mrs. Swift—Not at all. He's merely getting in form to beat the carpets.

SO DIFFERENT.



Father—Didn't I tell ye not to go skatin' till ye'd finished yer chores?

Soaked Son—I—I—wasn't a-skatin', paw; I—I jest thought I'd ta—take a little swim.

Completely Hidden.

"Once," boasted the little man who did not weigh over a hundred pounds, "I sat directly back of President Taft at the baseball game."

"How did you feel," asked the friend.

"Oh, out of sight."

Every Lady Read This.

Years ago when I was a sufferer, an old nurse told me of a wonderful cure for Leucorrhoea, Displacements, Painful Periods, Uterine and Ovarian troubles. It cured me in one month. It is a simple, harmless lotion that can be prepared by any one having the recipe. I will send it free to every suffering sister who writes to me. Address Mrs. A. Hudnut South Bend, Indiana.

Only Chance.

"Do you believe," queried the fair widow, "that universal peace will ever be established?"

"Not unless people quit getting married!" growled the old bachelor.

LADIES, PRESERVE YOUR YOUTHFUL APPEARANCE.

Madame Mignette's Beauty Cream and Skin Food removes every defect, spot, freckle, pimple, blemish or wrinkle, leaving the skin soft, clear and smooth. It is perfectly harmless and will not injure the most delicate skin. It preserves and brings back the youthful glow to the face and restitutes to the cheek, preserving it in the condition until extreme old age. This preparation is endorsed by all actresses and hundreds are now using it and are more than delighted with the results. Send 10 cts (10) cents for free sample which you can have filled at any drug store at a very small cost. Do not delay, but write at once. Box 681, Bluefield, Pa.

QUEER STATE OF AFFAIRS.

We are told that love is blind;
Yet we know 'tis true
That love can see upon one chair
Sufficient room for two.

Those Dutch Windmills.

Tourist—I suppose, my good man, that mill has ground out your living for a good many years?

Gentleman of Marken—Bless you, no. The old shack hasn't run for twenty years. I make a better living renting it as a model to American artists.

He Was Married.

"Pa, what would you call a man who has two wives?"

"A bigamist, Jimmie."

"What is he when he has more than two?"

"A hopeless idiot."

Wasted Effort.

Stella—I was surprised to hear of Miss Vassar's engagement to young DeSmythe.

Maude—Why were you surprised?

Stella—Well, it isn't in accord with the eternal fitness of things. She speaks three languages and he understands only one.

Short-Lived.

"It takes a man a lifetime to acquire fame," said the moralizer.

"Yes," rejoined the demoralizer, "and his memory sometimes lingers for as much as a week after his funeral."

His Specialty.

The One—He does not do much of an actor, I never saw his name on the bill boards.

The Other—No; but I understand it appears on a good many board-bills.

Beying Birthday Presents.

Clerk (in jewelry store)—What can I do for you, sir?

Prospective Customer—It's not a question of what you can do for *me*, but what can you do *me* for.

CHRISTENING — THE FAMILY

Carrying Out Orders.

Sir Lord Dufferins estate near Belfast, Ireland, once stood a historic ruin, a castle which had been a stronghold of the O'Neils. One day Lord Dufferin visited it with his steward, Dan Mulligan, and drew a line with his cane around it, telling Mulligan that he was to build a protecting wall on that line. And then he went to India, feeling secure as to the preservation of the great historic building.

When he returned to Ireland he hastened to visit the castle. It was gone! He rubbed his eyes and looked again. Yes, gone it certainly was, leaving not a trace behind. He sent for Dan and inquired, "Where's the castle?"

"The castle, my lord? That auld thing. Shure, I pulled it down to build the wall wid."

A Back Number.

A Poor Rule.

Lady—And always be careful of your associates. A boy often becomes like what he associates with.

Boy (whose father's a fish dealer)—Go on! Why, I've been with fish all my life and can't swim a stroke.

Didn't Look Fit.

Patience—And were you sick crossing the ocean, dear?

Patrice—Oh, dreadfully sick!

Patience—And did you see the doctor?

Patrice—Oh, my, no. I was too sick to see anybody.

Self-Victimized.

"So you got that article you were bidding on at the auction?"

"Yes," answered Mrs. Snapper. "Isn't it provoking? I was merely trying to run the price up on that other woman."

AN IMPROVEMENT.

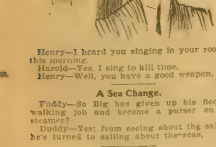
The boneless codfish is O. K.
And boneless hash's not bad;
But what we'd like to see to-day
Would be a boneless shad.

Not a Patriot.

His—Would you be willing to fight for your country if necessary?

Dix—Not me. I passed two weeks in the country last summer.

Armed.



Henry—I heard you singing in your room this morning.

Harold—Yes, I sing to kill time.

Henry—Well, you have a good weapon.

A Sea Change.

Fuddy—So Big has given up his floor-walking job and become a purser on a steamer?

Duddy—Yes; from seeing about the sales he's turned to sailing about the seas.

Criminal Negligence.

Customer—Did you ever make a serious mistake in a prescription?

Drug Clerk—Never, but once. I charged a man 10 cents for a prescription instead of $1.95.

The Greatest Sacrifice.

She—Now, dear, for my sake, make some sacrifice this Lent. Give up some pleasures, won't you?

He—I will, my darling. I'll give up trying to save money.

COMPROMISE.

Old Mother Hubbard
She went to the cupboard,
As always had been her habit,
I can't afford beef,"
She murmured with grief,
So she made her poor dog a rabbit.

Still a Fool.

"I met Pinkley today for the first time in years. He hasn't changed a bit. He's only fat now, but he doesn't seem to realize it."

"How do you mean?"

"Oh, he's forever talking about 'what a fool he used to be.'"

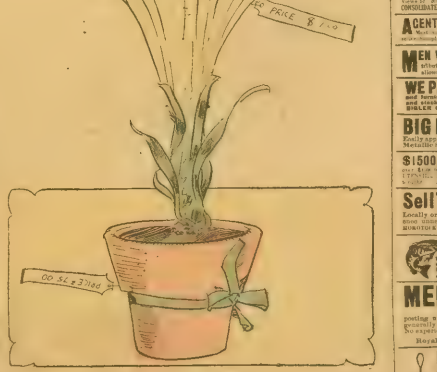
Easy to Interpret.

Hanley—It doesn't take a palmist to read Smith's palm.

Foote—What makes it easy?

Hanley—Smith is tattooed on it.

DAME NATURE'S EASTER LILY, AND---



WHAT SHE CRAVED.

"Are you happy?" asked the sailor of the mermaid in the sea.

"Far from happy," she responded, with her tresses blowing free;

"Though I know of all the waves that cast their foam caps through my hair,

Marcel waves are what I'm craving, those my dry-land sisters wear."

Charged for Curiosity.

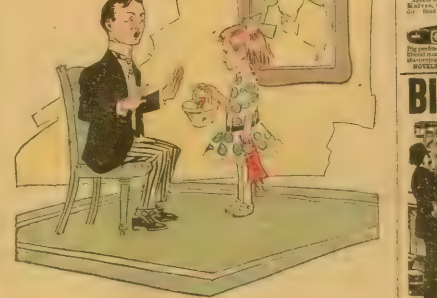
Bach—What is the reason you charge twice as much for my cuffs as you did formerly?

Laundress—Because you have begun making pencil notes on them.

Bach—What difference does that make?

Laundress—The girls waste so much time in trying to make them out!

A PERFECT MATCH.



Mr. Swell (examining little Ethel's colored eggs)—Ah, this is a beautiful one! What an exquisite tint of crimson!

Ethel—I thought you would like it. It's the same color sister Helen uses for her cheeks.

AGENTS WANTED

Agents—Great Hunting Trip Now Ended. Make Money Selling ROOSEVELT'S THRILLING EXPERIENCES IN AFRICA

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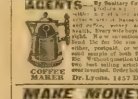

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CHICAGO LEDGER

Entered as second-class matter June 28, 1909, at the post-office of Chicago, Illinois, under act of March 3, 1879

Published Every Saturday

By W. D. BOYCE CO., CHICAGO, ILL.

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Single subscriptions to The Chicago Ledger by mail $1.00 a year. Six months, 50 cents. Canadian subscriptions must be made by Bank Draft, Registered Letter, Post-

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Back numbers of The Ledger can be had by addressing the publication office. Prices, if not specified, plainly written, should be sent with your address, and your order will receive prompt attention. Price 5 cents per copy.

BEWARE OF STRANGERS.

The Ledger employs no traveling representatives of any kind, and every person working in the name of The Ledger knows he or she can be sent known to the city or village where they have been employed to call this week. A liberal reward will be paid for information that will enable us to prosecute any person or persons now traveling in the above town in different sections of the country, claiming to be agents of The Ledger and thereby defrauding the people. Beware of strangers.

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CHICAGO, ILL.

GENTLE JABS.

Pay as you go—but don't go too often.

Many a man has to be scared into being good.

A man reaps what he sows—and rips what he wife sews.

If you would please your neighbor say less than you think

When an aeroplane chauffeur drops it's all up with him.

Never lodge a man's worth by the amount of insurance he carries.

A large inheritance transforms a skinny girl into a slender one.

A man is apt to get his back up when he is told to hump himself.

The wise man tries to acquire sense as early in life as possible.

A woman would cry more if it didn't give her such a vermilion hue.

The secret a woman can't find out may become her secret sorrow.

A man is apt to call it "hard luck" when he gets what he deserves.

It's a poor love letter that can't create a sensation when read in court.

A girl should not attempt to sing with feeling when she feels badly.

Many a man with a will of his own has a codicil added to it by his wife.

Flatter a man if you want him to have implicit faith in your judgment.

When it comes to jealousy and crowing a man can put it all over a rooster.

We all have a soft spot in our heads at birth—and some of us never lose it.

The attention of those we dislike is even worse than the neglect of our friends.

A clever woman always tells a fat man that he looks much thinner than he did.

An egotist is merely a man who is unable to disguise the interest he feels in himself.

If there is such a thing as untold agony it is the secret a woman is compelled to keep.

Some men run a business along the lines of the man who used a cannon for shooting mice

Some people are too honest to take advice they haven't paid for, and others are too wise.

People are attracted by their opposites. That's why a woman admires a man who is a good listener.

A [illegible] how handsome she is.

And many a man would never think of going fishing if it didn't afford such a good excuse for being a liar.

When a man meets his wife downtown the event is equivalent to meeting a hold-up man on his way home.

When a girl says that she has no use for a certain young man it usually means that he has no time for her.

An exchange says a good skunk is worth $5. And the man who gets a good skunk where he can skin him will earn every cent of it.

In Strange Seas.

(Continued from page nine.)

and thence up its rise. The distance was but short, and in a little while we suddenly found the seaboard under our view, with the hull of the Cousin Polly lying black in the dim light. But we had money. Scarcely ten feet from us were men, who, moving about as if from sheer weariness of doing nothing, talked in a language unknown to me.

Gretchen seized my arm and we both stopped short. It came to me that the men were a sort of shore-guard set by Opsoomer to see that nobody opposed to him put away to the ship, and I saw how he had tried to baffle possible efforts of my own, though he was not disheartened. His precautions only showed the need of action on my part.

I would have retreated at once, but my companion restrained me and seemed to listen attentively, and then Gretchen drew back and we went some rods to a safer point.

"They talked a strange tongue," I said. "What was it?"

"Dutch. When Vanderdecken the Great was wrecked here with his crew of many nations, languages were, of course, spoken. It has been the plan and the law ever since that all shall learn to speak each and all tongues. Yes, it was Dutch. Do you guess what they said?"

"No."

"Already Opsoomer is preparing for departure from this land in your ship."

"Leaving me behind?"

"Leaving you, that they are packing goods, making ready to go." They will take my father, willingly or as prisoner, according as he resists or agrees. As for you —well, they have made recompense for leaving you behind is to give you a deed to all this land. You know that Opsoomer and Ingehouse are our patrons, and all land is vested in them now. Well, they will deed it to you."

"And leave me alone?"

"Yes."

The ridiculous feature of the matter appealed to me and I was about to laugh when I saw something else in it. My blood grew hot with anger and I swung a hand to my pistol.

"They can keep the land!" I growled. "What I want is the ship! I'll have her before day breaks!"

"How can you do it?" she demanded quickly.

"My two men, Elijah Straw and Solon Carr are there, and if I can get them free I'll defy all opposition. You see, miss, a sailor knows more about fighting in a storm and than Opsoomer's crowd ever learned. The pot will be boiling in about half an hour, and the conspirators will be flung off like froth from the bubble of it."

"Perhaps I can watch on the deck."

"No doubt, but they won't know their business. Maybe will be asleep. I'll sneak past them and get to Elijah and Solon."

"If you can."

"Oh! I will. Why, I must. Now, I'll swim to the ship——"

"No, I'll carry you in my pikaro."

She spoke with such earnestness, but I rebelled against the plan. I was reluctant to have her risk anything more, and I knew the boat would be far more likely to be seen than a swimmer. She persisted, promising to start from a spot well distant from the watchers, and to row very softly. While she talked I had an idea. Her plan could be made promising by means of a wide detour on the water. The Cousin Polly lay with her starboard beam to seaward. If we drew alongside from that quarter it seemed a dollars to apron-strings that we would fool the deck-watch, though no sailor would have been victim to such a device.

The outcome of it was that I agreed. We waited, and the prisoners, found Gretchen's pikarro, entered, and then she pulled away with soft, step but telling strokes. The sea lay dark, as we kept wide of the headland, and our bows pointed far east of the Cousin Polly's anchorage.

The blood of the venture was in my veins. I regretted that Jerry Whitbeam was not along, but I was spurred on to act for a full crew. My nerves and muscles were tense, and I rather longed for a fight on the old hooker's deck.

I directed matters, and we passed by the after part of the Polly with a good sighty fathoms of brine between us, and then her and our gunwale, pulled a few minutes longer, and then swung our pikarro and brought around in a wide half-circle.

Here I found a new element in the hand of natural events. The current which had taken us to the exile land was setting the usual way, and it was plain that we had only to ship our oars, sit still and let the drift take us to the Polly's overhang. Then we undertook to accomplish.

"The ship is very dark," whispered the Flying Dutchman's daughter.

"Ay, mine, she shows no light."

"When you were master here there were several lights."

"That's the sea fashion. Deck lanterns are necessary for several reasons, and other lights figure, but the Polly is not in a sailor's hands now."

"Where will your captured men be?"

That was just what I wanted to know. The lad who had brought tidings of the seizure had stated that they were taken below the hatch, but small information for me. Unless Tony Moesser had had hands to overcome mutiny, the ship-thieves, knowing nothing about sea ways, would stow my mates in the cabin, stateroom, forecastle, afterhold or run, according as they took the notion. All places were one to them.

I made brief answer to the question, and then Gretchen whispered that we ought not to talk. And so it was true. We were fetching nearer to the Polly's counter, and a rush word would ruin all. We fell silent, and so drifted on.

After that I was all eyes, but the situation was against me. Although we set much lower than the ship, only her topmasts were outlined against the sky, her deck having the headland for a background, and so, in the dark dark night, it was a generally thing. I did my best to see if a human head showed above the rail-bulwarks, but I was inboard until we were directly under the counter.

I fenced off with an oar as accurately as I could, and then took her nor get a betraying thud from the blade, and then I had the boat's stern fairly by the rudder-post and the heavens had no man's head in silhouette. Nor did I see a head float to or from the deck.

Thanking to observe a dangling line I boldly to myself gently, gained hold of the channels, paused a moment at the shadow, and then, with a quick spring, sprang to the deck.

And formally boarded the enemy. What next?

Now I wished the deck-lanterns were alight, for the gloom was against me. I could see the mizzen-mast plainly, and the main and fore-masts comfortably, while the bunts of the sails and the yards made an irregular checker-board effect to and from the deck.

My first step was clear. I must know where the men were who held the deck, for to move without that knowledge would be extremely rash. Encounter with anybody would upset matters, at the least, and probably bring the end of effort. Until I had Elijah and Solon at my back I wanted no fighting.

Five minutes of listening brought no information, and I began to move. Caution like I learned to prowl, and I was soon satisfied that the after deck was deserted. Gliding now and then, I was almost instinctively aware of the windlass, that favorite resort of the human shore bird, but my search promptly rewarded. Not only did I distinguish dark forms, but heavy breathing floated to my ears.

Back against the windlass, the ship-shelves were keeping watch.

This was encouraging, but I had no proof that all were there. I turned, left the rail, and wandered a bit more before accepting the glad intelligence, nobody to trouble me. I then acted with more haste.

Making my way to the companion I softfooted it down and reached to the cabin. All was dark and still there. I realized the possibility that somebody might be taking advantage of the bunks in the rooms below, but I had a pair of torchlessness and acted accordingly. With hands before me I groped for the swinging lamp, found it, and boldly struck a light.

I saw the table, littered with half-consumed food, and beyond it, at the rear, one of the usual furniture, but that was all. The stateroom doors were closed, and I did not let them remain so. One after another I pushed them open, and found them empty.

Elijah and Solon were not there, nor yet in the steward's quarters, and an ugly truth began to dawn on me. They were stowed in either the forecastle or the hold, both of which were in the main cabin, and somewhere they were.

I was about to leave the cabin when I noticed that the rug always kept over the trap to the run was not in place. More, I saw peculiar marks on the floor, and then, as if fingers had been drawn across it lately by a violent force.

It would not do to neglect this evidence, and I raised the trap. The light above fell only a few inches into the black vault, but something happened at once. A growling, snarling noise arose from the gloom.

"Ahoy, you villainous Dutchman! I've been waiting to see you. Say, if you don't untie us and let us out of this stiffin' den I'll live to mast-head you for a bloody mariner!"

"Elijah!" I cried joyfully.

"Hey!" replied the voice, with a change of tone. "Who the dickens is that?"

"It is I, Ned Hazelton," I whispered excitedly. "Thank Heaven, you are alive! what about Solon?"

(Continued on page seventeen.)

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Drop Head, self-set, self-threading, self-regulating, self-oiling, self-adjusting, self-everything. Sews, runs, stitches, hems, tucks, ruffles, gathers, quilts, darns, embroiders, fells, shirrs, braids, cords, ties, sews on buttons, makes buttonholes, does fancy work, does plain work, does anything and everything that any sewing machine ever did or ever will do. Has the automatic lift, the automatic bobbin winder, the automatic tension release, the automatic stitch regulator, the automatic self-threader, the automatic everything. Has the only practical automatic reverse feed. Has more improvements than any other machine, makes more kinds of work, does better work, runs lighter, runs faster, runs easier, runs more quietly, runs more smoothly, runs more evenly, runs more perfectly than any other machine in the world

ONLY THE GOVERNESS.

BY ANNIE ASHMORE.

"Did you ever see such an outre figure in your life?" exclaimed the rich soda-bottle manufacturer's eldest daughter, Myra Dixon.

"Mercy! She's advancing like a spider," ejaculated Clarissa, the second. "Horrible! what leaps."

"Dang it, if she wouldn't do justice to the trapeze!" remarked a young gentleman in gumps—Myra's young gentleman.

"I see the chamois bounding."

And the mountain torrent near," chanted another young gentleman with an eyeglass. "Who is she?"

"Sister governess," replied Mrs. Dixon, fanning her rubicund visage. "A strange, secret creature, whom nobody can make anything out of. If it wasn't that she really brings Regina and Alice Maud on so well with their studies I should dismiss her tomorrow."

"We call her 'Daw' because she's so much like a silent, secret jackdaw!" giggled Regina, a pert miss of twelve.

"Her name is Estilda des Armeau—Excellaw, she calls herself. I'm not bad for the witty monkeys to call her 'Daw.'" said Miss Dixon, enjoyably. So said they all.

Meantime the governess was clambering up the steep side of the cliff with wonderful rapidity to the cave where Mr. Dixon's family picnic party had congregated.

This cave was in the face of a lofty crag, pretty near the top, and reached by a subterranean passage from the highroad. It overhung a steep, grassy hillock over which the sea boiled at high tide, running up into a sort of natural flue with great force. There was a ledge of grassy plain directly opposite the cave, but some feet lower down, and at inde t twenty feet apart, and divided by the gorge, now whirling white with foam, now dashed with hollow reverberations under the crag in unseen caverns.

And up the perpendicular side of the cliff Mademoiselle des Armeau was hastening from a new path, where she had been lingering alone while the family party were partaking of their noonday refreshments.

"Well, she is a plucky little thing," muttered Mr. Dixon to son and boy, who had been intently watching her progress while the others supped. "By George! she's so exhausted that there's not a drop of blood left in her lips. If she fell now she'd dash her life out."

Involuntarily he sprang forward and assisted the governess over the ledge.

Yes, her lips were white, and not only that, her face was white, too, and her hands bleeding, her great black eyes distended, and her heart throbbing.

"Oh, you horrid, rude thing!" observed Miss Clarissa, in modest confusion at the mere sight of her. "How could you make yourself so conspicuous?"

"Bless," cried Mrs. Dixon, beckoning the man-servant loftily, "see if you can't find something to bandage round mademoiselle's hands. I'm afraid of blood always sickens me."

"Ah, nevare mind, madam; so matter," panted the governess, looking anxiously from one to the other, and speaking with difficulty, as if the words she would have chosen eluded her memory. "Ah, come—come with me—I am tired—tired of this cavern, are you not? Ah, what shall I say? Dat will not do!"

Glancing round as if in terror, her eyes fell on a swing which had been hung up for the children, springing forward, she exclaimed:

"I am going to show you a trick—It may amuse you. Monsieur, loose the rope."

Impressed by the wild urgency, Stine obeyed, while most of the spectators looked on as if she had lost all sense of decency.

She stood on the outer edge of the cave, the rope in her hand, a ghastly irresolution in her face, then, forcing like a person of convulsive attempt at a smile; and then, with backward glances at their cruel brutes, were strung with unnatural strength, she began to coil the rope around a jutting rock, and to knot it with fierce energy.

"Help me!" she muttered to Maurice Dixon, who was nearest, "and show no alarm."

"What is it, mademoiselle—what—whispered the lad, but made no reply.

In another instant, with the rapid movement of a "lady of the air," she had twisted the loose end of the rope round her arm, and while the Misses Dixon screamed their horror in shrill notes, sped over the ledge and was dangling in the gorge! Only motionless for a moment, though. By little and little, with the nicest regard for the center of equilibrium, she swung herself back and forth with ever-increasing momentum, until at last she alighted like a bird upon the opposite plateau.

"Ah! was it not well done?" shrieked out the governess, with one cheek flaming scarlet; "but, Monsieur Dixon," and her flashing eyes, with the urgent horror mighty in them, appealed to the young man, "if you will fasten that plank to the rope, that I may throw it across to make a bridge for you all to cross over—ah, Saint Anni! do not refuse—you shall see something so grand from this side."

"What nonsense is this!" growled the bottle manufacturer; "is the young woman gone crazy?"

"Mamma," said Alice Maud, with her bony little shoulders very stiff, "don't expect us to take another lesson from that person after this. Myra says she is sure she was once an arabeit."

"And a decent good one, too!" murmured Myra's young gentleman.

During these side remarks Maurice Dixon, with a fear upon him which instinctively he concealed, as she was concealing her awful horror, fastened his end of the rope to a stout plank which had been carried through the subterranean passage to serve as a table, and pushed it across the chasm as fast as hands could do it. At the same time a shot echoed the twenty paces in a hopeless groan.

"They won't do it!"

"All ready! all so safe!" cried mademoiselle, leaping on the plank in wild excitement. "Now come quick! quick! Who first, before the grand sight is over?"

"Mother," said Maurice, seizing her arm "you first."

"Heavens! are you as mad as she?"

"There was a low roar, seemingly in the bowels of the earth

"The thunder!" shrieked Estilda des Armeau, clapping her hands with frenzied laughter. "Ah, little one, you shall go—

Before they could suspect her movement, she had bounded across the quivering plank, seized Alice Maud in her arms, and carried her back to the plateau.

"Father!" ejaculated Maurice, turning a livid face toward him, "follow her! Alice is—perhaps—not safe with—her."

It was well hinted.

In three strides Mr. Dixon had reached the pair, and was warding off mademoiselle as she flew at the fair little belief that the governess had gone mad.

The two young gentlemen followed; Mr. Dixon, blind to peril, lustrode on holding onto the hindmost, and crossing also.

It was remarkable that mademoiselle, as each one arrived, so managed that all kept their attention riveted upon her, and not one looked back at the cavern.

Myra, Clarissa, Regina, Maurice and the man-servant were left. Mademoiselle's stricken face still spoke with dread insistence to Maurice, though she no longer seemed to see him.

"Come, sister," said the young man, with his arm round the youngest, "we'll cross together. I know you're brave enough. Stay! I'll lead Regina over, and fetch back the rope to tie round your waists."

"Gracious, Maurice! I couldn't—couldn't!

"Yes, my darling, yes. There! steady, dear Regina—we're safe! Mademoiselle—"

Leaving the little girl dumb with wonder at his unwonted manner, he darted back with the rope, and the plank about Myra.

"Ah! that ominous rumbling.

"Brother, what—what is the matter?" tattered Miss Dixon, looking up in his face and then shrinking away.

"Yes' nay nothing. Clarrie may hear, and lose her last chance. Walk firmly. Keep your eye on mademoiselle, even if you fall the rope will hold you fast."

Step by step, with quivering knees, while sight and hearing sank in spite of her to the rending of the cavern below, stood the young lady, swaying now to the right now to the left, until mademoiselle darted from among the rest, and stretching out her hands, led her safely to the grass.

And at that moment the scream of horror broke from those on the plateau. They all rushed forward and beheld Estilda standing to Clarissa.

"Come, my dear," smiled the governess, dancing over the plank so gayly—ah, so gayly—and gripping the affrighted girl's waist, while her poor head fell like a band of steel upon her eyes. "I will lead you, dearest child, to the blondin, grand blondin—ah, so brave! And you two must lead the way. That is it. You are a dream of a sweet. Ah, thank heaven! that is well. So, so! And saved!"

Reaching the plateau amid the sobs and shrieks, and prayers of those who watched and the slipping of the rope, and the awful crashing behind them, and the ringing in their ears of the awful roar, echoing on their panic-stricken hearts, Maurice, Clarissa and the groom fell on their knees and hid their faces on the rocky spar of crag, sapped by countless storms, broke from the parent mountain and fell into the gorge, carrying with it the cave they had just been standing in.

And while the rescued family clung together as may have done Gods saved at the drowning of the world, Estilda des Armeau sat down alone and wept, for though she had been the instrument of their deliverance, she knew they could never suffer a quondom rope dancer to be the intimate friend of their children, and that she too plainly had proved herself to be.

Waiting and weeping, she sat, at the foot of the cliff, she had been alarmed at the sight of such a fissure growing in the precipitous wall before her eyes, and in an instant the danger of breaking asunder, and the governess, she had seized upon the only possible means of saving the unsuspecting party.

To look back would have frustrated would have been ruin. Already she saw that the appearance was beginning to yield; and they could never have crossed the chasm if panic-stricken. Her duty was clear, and in mind had rescued every soul, but still poor Estilda wept.

"Mademoiselle," said a gentle voice beside her, and Maurice clasped her hands, "I am proud of your brave heart."

"You are proud, monsieur?"

"Give me those heroic hands, your brave heart, Estilda!"

And when the family heard it they all cried, "Thank heaven!" and fell on Estilda's neck

His Unfortunate Modesty.

Seymour—I thought McBlusher got a job with a brass band.

Ashley—He did but his job lasted only one day.

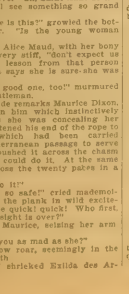
Seymour—What was the trouble?

Ashley—McBlusher was so modest that he had to have an assistant and the bandmaster refused to pay for the services of the two.

Seymour—You speak in riddles: I don't see what McBlusher's modesty had to do with his hiring as a soloist.

Ashley—You don't? It had everything to do with it. McBlusher was too modest to blow his own horn.

Habit.



"Now, don't you ask me another question Little boys should not be too inquisitive."

"What's inquisitive?"

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A Battle for a Mine;

Or, Fighting Desperate Foes

By Will Lisenbee

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CHAPTER V.

WYKOFF AND JESSUP.

"WHAT did you discover?" asked Jerry Jessup, as Wykoff came back.

"A whole lot," was the reply.

"How many are there in the party?" asked Jerry.

"I don't know. Four or five. I think."

"Tourists, prospectors or what?"

"Some ducks on their way to open a mine." Wykoff seated himself on a boulder and lighted his pipe. "I must keep an eye on them," he went on.

Jessup looked puzzled. "Why?" he asked.

"They are only prospectors, after all, and I can't see what business we can have with them."

"It is naturally to be supposed that when one goes into the desert to open a mine, carrying a lot of supplies, he knows what he is about."

"Sure. But we can't take the mine and run away with it, and when it is settled, why should we dog their footsteps?"

"There may be something more in it than you suppose."

"Possibly. Give me the details."

"From what they said, for I overheard their conversation, it seems that the mine they are to open is naturally rich."

"But if we attempt to take the mine by force we shall be outnumbered, and if we try to jump it the owner should never be able to remain and work it."

"Oh, I am not thinking of going into the mining business. Migratory birds such as we could not find much immediate profit. But these fellows are going to work the mine, and the ore will have to be carried by pack burros a distance of from fifty to a hundred miles through mountains and desert. It would be easy enough to hold up one of these outfits and get the ore."

Jessup laughed.

"And get a ton or two of junk for our trouble," he said, "and that would not pay us wages for carrying it to the nearest station."

The calm expression of Wykoff's face remained unruffled.

"I am not in the habit of figuring on a job that wouldn't pay," he remarked. "You must remember that."

"I do, and that is just what puzzles me."

"You have heard of high-grade ore, though you have never been near a mine."

"Yes. But what do you know about the ore in this mine?"

"Only what I overheard from the ones who are going to work it. They surely know, for no one would go to work in a mine without having had the assay done."

"Sure; but what do they say the ore is worth?"

"About ten dollars a pound!"

"Is it possible!" he cried.

"Since thing. Perhaps richer ore than that has been found in Cripple Creek, ore that was worth twenty-five dollars a pound. It was so rich in some of the mines that a system of searching the miners at the close of each day's work was established. Just as is done in the diamond fields, for the purpose of preventing any one stealing the ore from carrying off the high-grade ore."

"I see," said Jessup. "You have got a long head on you, Cy, and that is no lie. But if we captured the stuff, how could we manage to get rid of it in the market it?"

"I have thought of that, and think I have a plan mapped out which will work like a charm. Our first task will be to follow these ducks till they reach the mine. When they begin work we can get ready for business. It will probably be a month before any ore will be taken away. In the meantime we shall be getting ready to move on their works when the time comes. We'll slip over to the San Pedro River, make a raft and conceal it, where we will let it lie till needed. Then when we capture the first shipment of ore which we can do easily as rolling off a log, we'll drive the burros down the river, unload the stuff onto the raft and float down the current of the San Pedro. Our trail will end at the river brink, and there you are!"

"You're a genius," declared Jessup in admiration. "I think we can work the scheme to a finish without a hitch."

"That is the way it looks to me, and I have figured on a good many jobs in my life without making any very serious mistakes."

"The scheme looks good, and that's a fact. But are you acquainted with the country along the San Pedro?"

"I know it like a book. A few friends of mine helped me operate a good-paying business from that section for two years, and we never got lonesome."

"But do you know of some good place where we could run the boury ashore and hide it without leaving a trail as big as a wagon road?"

"I have my mind on the finest place in the world. It is a big cavern right at the waters edge almost, and we can put the goods in storage there without leaving as much as a cricket's trail behind. When we have discharged our cargo, we can turn the raft into the current and let her go. If necessary we can let the stuff lie there for months or a year, till the whole affair is forgotten, and then mill it at our leisure. No one could prove anything if they saw us with the ore, and the whole scheme can be worked as easily as one can flip a penny."

"By thunder! you're right," agreed Jessup. "I am in on this, and if we don't win something better than cracking a crossroads grocery, we ought to turn missionaries."

"Then we may as well take things easy, keep our eyes open that we are not caught napping, listen to the gossip, and rake in enough to put us on Easy street for a period long enough."

And the two plotters threw themselves on their blankets and were soon asleep.

CHAPTER VI.

MAY DRAWS UP.

After many days' toilsome travel, Mark Huber and his little party were descending into a valley, and when an exclamation from Dick Fenton caused every one to look in his direction.

"Vulture Gap at last!" he cried, pointing to a notch in the rugged ramparts of the hills that lay to the westward. "Our journey is nearly finished. We shall reach there within two hours."

"I never was as glad to see a place before," said Mark. "Let us give three cheers for Vulture Gap."

Every member of the party took off his hat, swung it aloft and gave three cheers with a hearty good will.

"And now," said Frank Stetson, "let us give three cheers for Mark Huber, who has led us through the wilderness; who has fed us—not with manna—but with grub that is a good deal better, and who will continue to feed us so long as we behave ourselves and earn our salt!"

This responded with a will, and the rocks of the canyon echoed and re-echoed with their shouts.

"Gentlemen," said Mark, as the noise subsided, "I object to having all the honor of provisioning this expedition. In your kind expressions you have overlooked the jack rabbits which furnished nearly all our bill of fare. So I now propose three cheers for Frank and the fleet-footed jack rabbits!"

Amid roars of laughter the cheers were given, and as the sound of their voices died away, one of the burros opened his mouth and brayed mournfully.

At the sound the brute out afresh, and was joined in by all except Frank, who, with a wave of his hand said:

"It seems to me that this levity is out of place and ill-timed. It is evident that our mule, there, looked upon the unfortunate jack rabbits as belonging to some branch of his family and he has doleful notes are uttered in reproof of your flippant reference to the fleet-footed members of their existence. In the joys of life, let us respect the dead."

"I suppose I'm the mule," said Mark. "The connection you have established between our sentimental burro and jack rabbits is a good one. But while affected me deeply—deep down in my stomach, which is already oppressed by a squeamish feeling which must lead to a rejection of jack rabbits as food in the future. But look! Some one has beaten us to Vulture Gap!"

As he spoke, he flung his hand in the direction of the gap, and above it, dimly visible, a slender column of smoke rose against the black summit of the mountain beyond.

Every eye was turned on the spot, and for a moment there was not a word spoken, a troubled look came over the face of Dick Fenton, and he flung out his hand with a warning gesture.

"Boys," he said, "we are too late. Some one has been up to the mine, and that may spell trouble."

A look of disgust came over the face of Ellis Filter, the old prospector.

"If we find anybody roostin' up there," he said, "I am unanimously in favor of makin' him off. That's me."

"Who could have discovered the mine?" said Mark. "If any one should find it the stakes would show that it is already taken."

"Little any one would care for that if the mine was found to be rich," remarked Fenton. "But we can soon find out. Let us push on. After all, the fire may have been kindled by some hunter or some band of emigrants."

The pack burros were urged forward and

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the party took up its march toward Vulture Gap.

For more than two hours they pressed forward in silence. But Mark's mind was busy at work trying to solve the mystery of the smoke at the gap. It was a wild and unfrequented spot, and few there were who ever penetrated its precincts.

As they drew near the gap the figure of a man suddenly emerged from the shadows of the cliffs and came slowly down the slope.

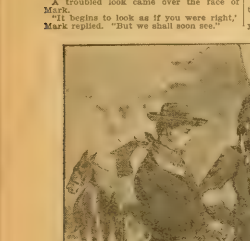
As the eyes of Mark fell on the man he started with amazement and a sudden cry escaped his lips.

"Why, it is my uncle Nathan Ray!" he cried.

"Ah! what did I tell you?" said Fenton. "That fellow is up to some crooked work, mind what I tell you."

A troubled look came over the face of Mark.

"It begins to look as if you were right," Mark replied. "But we shall soon see."



"We go hunt," he replied.

The little party was now within speaking distance of Ray, who came forward smiling and held out his hand to greet Mark.

"I'm tickled to death to see you, my boy," he said, as he grasped the boy's hand. "I ran over here to pay you a visit, and lo! you were nowhere to be found. I never should have found the place but for the big gap, which can be seen for miles and miles. I am not positive yet that I struck the right place, but now you are here it don't make any difference."

"Are you alone?" asked Mark.

"Oh, no. I have a friend with me who was in for a little jaunt into the wilds, and we have been loafing about while keeping a watch for you to appear on the scene."

"Did you find the snakes at my father's mine?" asked Mark.

"Not a snake. But the chap who is with me is up to all this mining business and he has been nosing around considerable. He bit onto an outcropping of something that looks pretty good, and we have staked it and are doing a little work in a small way."

Mark's face took on a serious cast, and something in the countenance of Dick Fenton told Mark that the prospector suspected Ray of treachery.

"Won't you introduce me to your friends?" asked Ray, as he turned his gaze to the other members of the party. "Or do people have to be introduced out in the wild country?"

Well, that depends," said Mark, with a smile, and turning, he introduced his uncle to Fenton and the rest of the party.

"So you have discovered a mine, have you?" said Fenton.

"We think we have," replied Ray, "but I would not know a piece of gold-bearing quartz from a sandstone."

"Where is it located?"

"About a half mile beyond the gap, in a little ravine."

"Close to a broken down pine tree?"

"Well, I think so."

"Then you are probably on Mark's mine."

"I don't think so, for it was not staked."

"Some one may have removed them," said Fenton significantly. "But we shall soon find out. Suppose we push on, Mark? It is getting late, and we ought to look out a camping place."

The party moved on up the slope, passed through the gap and halted in a grove of pines, near a deep ravine which was watered by a small spring.

While the horses were being unpacked, Nathan Ray led the way to the mine he had staked, followed by Dick Fenton and Mark Huber.

Presently they descended the slope and came to a rude windlass which had been set up over a shallow shaft. On the landing sat Theo Templeton, Ray's partner, calmly smoking his pipe.

He got up and shook hands with Fenton and Mark on being introduced.

"It seems as if you are working on a pretty good vein of quartz," remarked Fenton, as he examined the rock taken from the shaft. "But unfortunately for you, this claim was staked several months ago and you have had your work for nothing."

"There was no stake here when we came," said Templeton composedly. "And under the circumstances, you could hardly expect us to relinquish our rights."

"What rights?" asked Fenton abruptly.

"Having staked the mine in good faith, we propose to hold onto it till the law decides between us."

Dick Fenton wheeled and faced Nathan Ray.

"Is this the position you take?" he asked.

Ray was confused for a moment.

He looked first at Fenton and then at Mark; then he let his eye wander to Templeton.

CHAPTER VII.

A FRIEND IN NEED.

"Why," said Ray, hesitatingly, "surely you could not expect us to abandon such a claim as this merely on somebody's word that the claim had been jumped by a stake?"

Fenton flung out his hand with an impatient gesture.

"I don't intend to mince matters with you," he said. "If the stakes are gone you or your partner removed them."

"Meaning to include me?" cried Templeton, starting forward, an angry light in his eye.

"Sure thing," replied Fenton, facing the other.

A bitter oath fell from Templeton's lips, and he made a move as if to advance upon Fenton, but Ray checked him with a wave of the hand.

"None of that," he said. "We don't want to have any trouble over this matter."

"I don't allow any one to insult me," swore Templeton.

"No, we're not going to have any trouble," remarked Fenton. "When we get ready to work the mine we'll do it. That is all."

"Not this mine," corrected Templeton.

"No other," said Fenton. "I notify you to vacate the premises by to-morrow morning at seven, as we mean to go to work at that time."

"You are cursed cool," cried Templeton, with an evil laugh. "I have seen men get a bullet though their hides for less than that."

Fenton laughed.

"Thanks for the information," he said. "I should advise you to open a school. Come on, Mark; we'd better go back and help the fellows with the work or they may cut us out of our claims."

And wheeling, he strode up the slope, followed by Mark.

Templeton stood glaring after them, his face working with suppressed emotion.

"I ought to put a bullet through him," he said.

Ray shook his head.

"We don't want to have any trouble of that sort," he said. "In the first place, it would be bad policy; in the second place, they outnumber us two to one."

Templeton's face was still red with anger. "I know all that as well as you do," he said. "But one thing is certain—I now it in that man's eye—we have got to fight if we hold this mine. That is certain."

Ray looked troubled. "I am inclined to believe you," he said. "I don't like the looks of that man Fenton. I could see fight in him from the start. But, by thunder! what can we do?"

Templeton seated himself on a boulder and lighted his pipe. It was evident that he was disturbed by the outlook.

"We might fortify ourselves and hold them at bay for a time," he said, "but if they saw fit they could worry us a whole lot."

That last is what was troubling me. We must hit on some scheme to hold the mine. Possession means everything, but how are we to hold it against such odds?"

"We can work on the night in building a fortification about the shaft, put our grub inside along with our camping outfit, and keep them on constant guard."

"Just looks good," nodded Ray. "But in time our provisions would play out and we'd be up against it."

"I have taken that into consideration. But in the meantime, we could be at work. Every pound of rock we take from the vein is worth ten dollars, roughly estimated."

"Mebbe I might be able to give ye a little help!"

Both men started at the sound of the strange, piping voice, and turning, they be-

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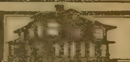

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held the slouching figure of an old man standing not a dozen yards away.

His hair was gray, his face wrinkled with age, though his form was erect and his eyes bright.

He chuckled with evident amusement at the surprise depicted on the faces of the two

"Well, who the thunder are you?" demanded Templeton, abruptly, fixing a critical gaze on the intruder.

"Me? Oh, I'm Mountain Joe—scout, hunter, prospector and gentleman of leisure—at your service, gentlemen," replied the stranger, approaching and seating himself on a boulder. "If you want to exchange cards with me we'll get acquainted; if not there will be no offense on my part."

"Why should there be?" growled Templeton.

The stranger opened and shut his hand with a comical grin.

"I never argue with any one," he said. "My mission on earth is one of peace and good will to them that's friendly. To them that's not in sympathy with my style I pass by like ships that pass in the night. If any one flies a signal of distress, I send out a boat and see if I can give assistance. That's me. When I drops anchor down this slope I hears you talkin' of gittin' ready for a little scrimmage. It seems that some one is double teamin' on ye, and that you're in need of reinforcement. I always like to help the under dog. I have got about twenty men in my company, and we are always ready to throw our strength where it will do the most good."

He leaned back against a boulder, and surveyed the two men with a calm scrutiny.

"Well, I'll be hanged if I get on to your drift," confessed Templeton. "I may as well admit that we are in a hole just at present, and are up against an outfit that has got us outnumbered, but I don't understand your proposition to help us. Have you really a number of men with you?"

"Twenty or so," replied the stranger.

"Where are they?"

"A mile or so from here."

"Do you really wish to help us, or were you merely joking?" asked Templeton, becoming interested.

"I never waste my breath talking through my hat," replied Mountain Joe.

"Can you bring your men here?"

"Whenever I say the word."

"What are your terms?"

The old man laughed.

"I want all I can get," he said.

"That is evident, but what is the lowest you are willing to bring your men here for and help us out?"

"A third of your interest in the mine," was the reply.

Templeton threw the stranger a quick glance.

"Do you know how much you are asking?" he queried

"I haven't figured it up."

"This mine is probably worth a million dollars."

"So much the better."

"And you expect a third of it for your services?"

"A third of your interest, I said," remarked Mountain Joe with a cunning grin on his face.

"You mean by that to infer that my title to the mine is not good?"

"I don't know. You are about to have trouble over it, and there must be another claimant."

"There is another who claims the mine, but we have the best right."

"Still you are going to have to fight for it? Well, if you want to accept my offer I am ready to deliver the goods."

"Who are your men?"

"Apaches."

"The Devil!" gasped Templeton.

"Pretty near it when they get started," interposed Mountain Joe with a grin.

"By thunder, we'd be in as much danger as our foe!" ejaculated Ray. "I pass. I am not in a hurry to be butchered to make an Arizona holiday, thank you."

CHAPTER VIII.

MOUNTAIN JOE.

Templeton looked at the old man with a critical gaze.

"What are you driving at?" he asked

"At a bargain with you," was the reply. "If you want me and my redskins to come around and shoo off the other fellows that's claiming the mine, just give me something to make it interesting. You said as I came up that the stuff there is worth ten dollars a pound. Give me a third of the rocks and the bargain is made."

"Can you control your Indians?"

"Like an old farm team. Every one is bridle-wise so long as we can keep licker out of them, and I reckon there isn't enough licker in a hundred miles of here to make a cricket's head swim."

"Not unless you have some with you."

"I haven't."

"But who is to feed all those redskins?"

"They'll rustle their own grub all right. They made a raid on a ranch a few days ago, and have enough meat to last a month."

"What are they doing off the reservation?"

"Playing hookey," laughed Mountain Joe.

"Won't the troops round them up and spoil our game?"

"I reckon not. They can't find 'em. They are pretty slick when it comes to dodging. Oh, I'll look out for that part of the business. Now, what do you say to my proposition? Do I get a third of what we get out of the mine if I furnish my guard?"

"Yes, I am willing, if Ray says the word."

"Then I'll say it's a bargain," said Ray. "When can you bring those savages?"

"Within an hour's time."

"I guess you'd better wait till about midnight," said Templeton. "Then bring them in as quietly as possible so we can give our friends over there a little surprise when they come here to take possession of the mine in the morning."

"That will do. I'll be on hand, never fear," and with this the visitor swung himself up the slope and was soon lost to sight across the summit of the ridge.

Meantime Mark Huber and his friends had pitched their tent and were preparing supper.

"Your uncle Nathan has proved the rascal that I supposed," remarked Fenton to Mark. "What a pity that you met him in Denver."

"What a pity that I didn't have prudence enough to keep my mouth shut," interposed Mark.

"Well, it can't be helped now, and we must make the best of it," said Fenton.

After supper they sat about the campfire talking over the situation.

"It can only amount to a little annoyance after all," said Fenton. "When we get ready to work the mine we'll simply take possession of it and go to work."

This plan met the approval of the rest, and it was decided to carry it out on the following morning.

Being weary with the day's journey, they retired to their blankets at an early hour, and slept till the first beams of the rising sun woke them.

Fenton was kindling a fire when a sudden exclamation came from Mark.

"What is it?" asked Fenton.

Mark flung his hand in the direction of the mine.

"Indians!" he gasped.

Fenton stood in a maze of astonishment. Scattered about the mine were more than a score of Indians—forbidding looking creatures, standing or squatting here and there, some eating while others stood about the fire cooking huge chunks of meat which they held over the blaze.

"Well, I'll be blowed!" ejaculated Fenton. "What do you think of that?"

"Going to double team on us, I reckon," said Filter. "That is some of that man Templeton's work."

"It looks that way," agreed Fenton. "I guess I'll run over and size up the bunch and see what they're up to."

He walked down the slope, followed by Mark. As the two approached Templeton came forward to meet them.

"Fine morning, gentlemen," he greeted. "Hope you rested well."

"Oh, we can't complain," replied Fenton.

"Are you most ready to go to work?" asked Templeton, a little sarcastically.

"What are those Indians doing here?" asked Fenton.

"Eating their breakfasts," replied Templeton.

"So I see. But who brought them here?"

"Mountain Joe—whoever he is."

"How does he come to be herding those Apaches about the country?"

"I'm not his keeper. All I know is he has them, and has offered me their services in case they are needed."

"In what way?"

"To protect my partner and me from any one who may try to get possession of the mine. It was a nice little arrangement in view of the fact that you meditated using force to expel us."

Fenton looked at Templeton with a calm scrutiny.

"You look very much like a man who would go into partnership with an Indian," he said, "especially when you have some dirty work to do which you are afraid to undertake yourself."

"Be careful how you talk!" warned Templeton.

Fenton laughed.

"It is very kind of you to warn me," he said. "I should never have suspected any danger."

"And you defy me, do you?"

"Sure thing," responded Fenton cheerfully.

"Do you know that I can have those Indians butcher you and your whole party if I say the word?"

"I must confess that I do not."

"Do you want me to show you?" There was an ugly look on Templeton's face as he spoke.

"I have no objections. I have never been butchered by an Apache, but it must be a very unpleasant feeling."

"Are you a fool?" asked Templeton, his face red with anger and disgust.

He realized that Fenton was poking fun at him.

"You could hardly expect me to be a judge," replied Fenton, a smile lurking about his mouth.

"I guess that is right. But I am not here to talk nonsense."

"Then stop it."

"I will. What do you propose to do about the mine?"

"We shall go to work to-day."

Templeton laughed as if it were a good joke.

"Oh, sure you can go to work—breaking rocks up there in the canyon if you feel like it, for no one will object."

"We shall begin work in the mine."

"What mine?"

"'The Whispering Pine.'"

"Is that what you call this mine?"

"That is the name Mr. Huber gave to it."

"Then I must look on what you say as a joke."

"I have no objections."

"If you make any attempt to take possession of the mine I will have you tied and gagged."

"You would not do it yourself then?"

"I'd have the Apaches do it for me."

"I hardly think you could. But I don't care to discuss that part of the matter. You have played the sneak—you and Ray—in attempting to hold the mine, and now I warn you that I mean to take possession of it, and that is all I have to say."

"You are talking through your hat, as you will find."

At this juncture Nathan Ray approached.

"Mr. Ray," said Mark, "I hope you don't intend to go on with this business. You know well enough that you have no right to the mine, and you ought to realize that you cannot hold it."

"Why, my dear nephew," responded Ray, "you should not talk in such a disrespectful manner to your kinsman. It isn't right."

"I do not mean to be disrespectful," replied Mark, "but this is a matter of business, and it is very unkind of you to try to take advantage of me."

"You look at it in the wrong light. As you say, it is purely a matter of business, and we must treat it as such. We came here and discovered this ledge. It looked good to us and we began work on it, after setting our stakes. The mine is probably worth a fortune, and we should be foolish to surrender our claims to you. I am not denying that your father staked a claim, but we deny that this is the claim. There were no stakes here, as I have told you."

"Then you must have removed them," declared Mark hotly.

Nathan Ray smiled—a smile that showed the cunning and evil in his face.

"My dear boy," he said, "I am afraid you will have a great deal of trouble proving your statement. This is a point you must not forget."

CHAPTER IX.

TROUBLE BREWING.

When Mark and Fenton returned to camp

they found that Flitter and Frank had prepared breakfast.

While they ate they discussed the situation.

"So they have brought some redskins to help them out," commented Flitter. "What the Sam Hill are they doin' off the reservation?"

"That's what we shall soon find out," remarked Fenton. "No doubt Uncle Sam's troops are looking for them now, and if we could get to them the reds would soon be rounded up."

"Then why not notify the government authorities at once?" suggested Mark.

"A good idea," agreed Fenton. "But first I desire to try another plan. If it works we shall be rid of the Apaches in short order."

"What is your plan?" asked Flitter.

"To frighten the Indians away."

"How can it be done?"

"I am quite sure that Apache Frank is among the Indians. If so, I shall go to him and have a little talk with him."

"You know him, then?" said Mark.

"Yes. I did a little work as scout for Captain Hartley a few years ago, and, as it happened, I was the means of sending Apache Frank back to the reservation. He was out on the war-path with some others of his tribe, and I trailed them to their hiding place. I think Apache Frank will remember me all right if he happens to be in the band."

"That would be a good joke on Ray and his manager's partner if we could shoo the reds away!" chuckled Flitter. "By gum, I have no doubt that you can do it if Apache Frank is among them."

"We shall see."

After breakfast, Fenton strolled in the direction of the mine. Most of the Indians were loitering about the camp, but others were scattered about the canon.

Passing the "Whispering Pine," he descended the slope to a spot where some half dozen Indians were playing cards, sitting in the midst of a huge boulder.

As he drew near he recognized one of the Indians as Apache Frank. He approached and made a sign to the chief, who instantly came to meet him.

"How do, Frank," greeted Fenton.

"How! how!" cried the Indian, a little startled. "Where go?"

"What are you doing off the reservation?" asked Fenton abruptly.

Apache Frank cowered under the question.

"We go on hunt," he replied, evasively.

"Look here, Apache Frank," said Fenton, "you know you are telling me a lie. You are here on some mischief and you must tell me all about it."

"We go hunt, find Mountain Joe. He great hunter."

"Yes, a great old rascal," interposed Fenton. "Did he bring you here to help the men at the mine?"

Apache Frank gave assent.

"We help him, the white men keep mine," he said.

"But they don't own the mine," said Fenton. "Now, you must get into trouble over this business."

"Mountain Joe him say white men heap buenos."

"Heap rascal," interposed Fenton.

"No."

"Yes, and you will get yourself into trouble if you have any about here. If you don't get out of here right away I'll send word to the troops at Fort Grant and they will put you in prison."

Apache Frank, though he had once been a dangerous character, had learned how futile it was to fight Uncle Sam's soldiers.

"You no like soldiers?" he said.

"Yes, I shall, unless you go away at once."

"Vamose?"

"Exactly."

Fenton stood gazing at the Indian critically.

"I want you to see your people who are here and tell them that you must vamose. Do you understand?"

"Me sabe," replied Apache Frank, who, like many of the Indians of the Southwest, mixed a great deal of the Mexican dialect with his broken English.

"All right," said Fenton. "Then I want you to get ready to move at once. But don't tell the white men. Do you understand?"

Apache Frank nodded.

"Me sabe," he said.

"Good. Now go tell your people and be off. The quicker the better."

"Me sabe."

Fenton returned to camp in the best of spirits.

"We shall soon have some fun," he said, on his return.

"You saw Apache Frank?" asked Mark.

"Yes, and he is going away at once and will take all the other redskins with him."

"By George! that is a rum go!" cried Frank. "Dash it, let's tell him on your dear uncle, Mark."

"A pretty hard one," laughed Mark.

"And now," said Fenton, "we may as well get ready to take possession of the mine and go to work. We may have a little brush with Templeton and Ray, but I don't look for much trouble. We want to be on the ground at the proper time, and just when the Indians make a move to vacate the premises, we'll drop in and take the mine."

"I guess we'd better get ready for business in case the fellers try to smoke us," suggested Flitter, slipping a heavy pistol in his belt.

"I may as well go prepared to get into the game. If there is any bluff put up," remarked Frank Stetson, as he took up his rifle. "We may have to make a little demonstration in self-defense if nothing more."

"That's right," agreed Mark, "and I had as well get in the first lick."

He thrust a pistol into his pocket, and Fenton led the way in the direction of the mine, followed by the others.

As they passed through a grove of pines and entered the glade in front of Apache Frank could be seen moving swiftly here and there among the Indians in charge of his band. It was evident that the chief was making all his promise to get out without further delay.

Templeton and Ray were preparing to go to work in the mountain. Mountain Joe walked in the direction of the spot where the Apaches were collected.

As Mark and his friends approached Templeton threw a glance of defiance at them.

"I thought you said you intended to go to work in the mine this morning," he said with a sneer, as he turned to Fenton.

"I think I did mention it," replied Fenton carelessly.

"It looks as if you had made a slight mistake."

"Not at all. We shall go to work all right. You had better get your tools out and vacate."

Templeton laughed, a low, evil laugh that showed the very bad taste.

Mark realized that there was going to be trouble. He glanced quickly about him. Near by was a pile of rocks. In front Fenton stood facing Ray and Templeton, but Frank Stetson had disappeared.

Next week's Ledger will contain further chapters of this exciting story of boyhood adventures. You will miss a great treat if you do not read it to the end. We will give constantly the very best stories of entertainment that money will buy, so send in your subscription at once to the Ledger regularly, if you are not doing so. You will not regret it.

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I have won and wasted treasure;
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And some of them were dreariness,
And all these things—but two things
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In Strange Seas.

(Continued from page twelve.)

"Hooray, matey!" rumbled the voice, now as joyful as any could be. "By the board of Neptune, our skipper is here, Solon!"

My heart was thumping with delight, but suddenly I had a shock. Footsteps sounded at the companionway. Somebody was coming below, and, alas! the voice was unmistakable for me.

The continuation of this highly interesting story will be found in the Ledger issue of next week. It tells in very strange and fascinating situations. Read it. If you are not a regular subscriber to the Ledger we would like to have your name on our list. The Ledger is only $1.00 per year.

He Wanted a Chance.

"Beef again," said the head of the house discontentedly as the platter was passed before him. "Beef, beef, beef! Now, dear, there are times when beef begins to pall on me."

"We had mutton yesterday," said his wife, "and on Monday, you know, we had a roast loin of pork."

"O, I know. That's just it. Beef, mutton and pork—pork, mutton and beef—no monotone ever equaled it."

"You don't care for chicken?"

"O, I get tired of chicken, that's all. What I would like is a little change."

"We had a rabbit stew last week. I thought you enjoyed that. If you like I'll have it again tomorrow."

"My dear," said the head of the house, "I don't see why you imagine that because I happen to eat something with a tolerable relish I can eat it seven days in the week. Let the rabbit rest for a while. Bert?"

"If I had known you wouldn't care for it I might had some fish."

"You can't get any fish that has the right flavor after it has been packed and kept on ice."

"It's a pity that some new animal can't be invented for you," said the long-suffering housewife, rebelling. "I was reading the other day that there are iguanas in South America, and that the Digger Indians considered ants' eggs a delicacy."

"I don't think I can be hard to satisfy," said the head of the family. "Perhaps I had no right to hint that an occasional variety in my diet would be—what is this?"

"What, which?" replied the lady as he masticated slowly and analytically.

"This—this meat."

"It's venison steak. The red currant jelly is to the right of you."

"I suppose you think that's funny," said the head of the house.

A Revolutionary Hero.

The real origin of the greatest fake hero story ever told has come to light in a scrap book owned by an old resident of Washington.

A group of revolutionary heroes were standing before an old bar in Washington, and from the lips of each there fell wonderous stories of what he had done in the shock of battle or the frenzy of the charge. Finally one old fellow with long white whiskers remarked:

"I was personally acquainted with George Washington.

"I was lying behind the breastworks one day pumping lead into the Britishers, when I heard the patter of a horse's hoofs behind me. Then came a voice:

"'Hi, there! Fire with the deadly aim! Look here a moment.'

"I looked around and saluted, recognizing General Washington, and he said:

"'What's your name?'

"'Hogan,' I said.

"'Your first name?'

"'Pat. Pat Hogan.'

"'Well, Pat,' he said, 'go home. You're killing too many men.'

"I think I'd better get a few more, general,' I said, kind of apologetic.

"'No,' he ordered, 'you're killing too many. It's slaughter. And, Pat, don't call me general; call me George.'"

Big Chance for Hypnotists.

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Achers—Humph! How much do you make a year on hypnotic exhibitions?

Scientist—Well—er—not very much as yet; but then, you know, hypnotism is a new thing, and—

Achers—Yes, I know. Why don't you drop it?

Scientist—Eh? Why should I?

Achers—You could make your everlasting fortune as a dentist.

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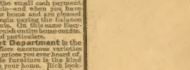
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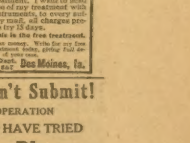
For fifteen days. If you do not wish to continue, costs you nothing. I am curing Catarrh, Deafness, Head Noises, and Throat troubles, with a remarkable discovery. Will send you a course of my treatment with two instruments, a catarrh snuffer, by mail, all charges prepaid, to try 15 days.
—do This is the free treatment.
Send to me today. Write for my free treatment today, for a few days only.
Dr. W. O. Coffee, Suite 207, Des Moines, Ia.

Ladies Don't Submit!
TO AN OPERATION
UNTIL YOU HAVE TRIED
Magnolia Blossom

Let Us Send You 10 Days Treatment Free
We want to show you free of cost what wonderful results Magnolia Blossom can accomplish. If you suffer from Leucorrhoea, (Whites), Displacement or Falling of the Womb, Ovarian Troubles, Ulceration, Inflammation, Laceration, Tumors, Painful Periods, Bearing Down Pains, Nervousness, Melancholia, Flatulency, Backache, any form of Female Trouble, just sit down at once and write for our 10 Days Free Treatment of Magnolia Blossom. We know what it has done for thousands of other women who have suffered just as you do now and we know what it will do for you. All we want is a chance to convince you too. Just have a little faith, send us your name and address today and let us send you the 10 Days Free Treatment as soon as possible, with valuable advice from our Lady Physician. For your health's sake accept our Free Offer. Address,
SOUTH BEND REMEDY CO.,
Box 8, South Bend, Indiana

We want to send you a trial order of HAYNER BOTTLED-IN-BOND WHISKEY at our risk—on our guarantee it will please you—or it will not cost you one cent—

We want to prove to you what a rich, pure and delicious whiskey this is.
We want to convince you of the extraordinary saving our DIRECT FROM DISTILLER plan of selling means to you. HERE'S OUR OFFER:

WE WILL SEND YOU
4 Full Quart Bottles of Hayner Private Stock Bottled-in-Bond Whiskey—Express Prepaid—for $3.20
(Goods will be shipped in strong SEALED Cases.)

When it arrives—try it—every bottle if you like. Then, if you don't find it all we claim—one of the most exquisite whiskies you ever tasted and equal to any you could buy in your city for $5—send it back at our expense and your $3.20 will be returned by first mail.

THINK OF IT—THIS IS AT THE RATE OF ONLY 80 CENTS A QUART FOR THIS HIGHEST GRADE BOTTLED IN BOND WHISKEY.

—a whiskey that is distilled, aged and bottled under U. S. Government supervision — every bottle sealed with the Government's BOTTLED-IN-BOND STAMP—positive assurance that it is a STRAIGHT whiskey, fully aged, full 100 per cent proof and full measure—and absolutely pure to the last drop.

TRY IT—That's all you are asked to do. Send us your order TO-DAY and the agency to address for nearest Shipping Depot.

Orders for Ariz., Cal., Colo., Idaho, Mont., Nev., N. Mex., Ore., Utah, Wash. or Wyo. must be on the basis of 4 Quarts for $4.00 by Express Prepaid or 20 Quarts for $16.25 by Freight Prepaid.

THE HAYNER DISTILLING COMPANY, Div. 130
Dayton, O., St. Louis, Mo., St. Paul, Minn., New Orleans, La., Jacksonville, Fla.
1 Distillery at Troy, Ohio. Established 1868. Capital $500,000. Fully Paid.

12 FULL QUART BOTTLES $4.75 STRAIGHT KENTUCKY WHISKEY

NO BLEND—NO COMPOUND—NO IMITATION

Regular Prices—Bottled Goods
EXPRESS PREPAID
ON THE FOLLOWING GOODS ONLY

4	Full Quart Bottles SUNNY BROOK WHISKEY Bottled in Bond	$4.00
4	Full Quart Bottles Cuckenheimer Bottled in Bond Whiskey	$4.00
4	Full Quart Bottles Mellwood Straight Kentucky Whiskey	3.00
12	Full Pint Bottles Hi-Grade Straight Kentucky Whiskey	4.00

Wholesale Department
GOODS SHIPPED F. O. B., ST. LOUIS

3	Full Gallons Old Ancestry Whiskey	$ 5.84
5	Full Gallons Old Ancestry Whiskey	9.68
24	Full Quarts Straight Kentucky Whiskey	12.00
50	Full Pint Bottles Family Trade Whiskey	10.00
100	Full Half Pint Bottles Family Trade Whiskey	12.00

WHY WE MAKE THIS OFFER

Just in order to demonstrate beyond any question or doubt that our Straight Kentucky Whiskey has no equal at any price for purity, wholesomeness, mellowness and quality, we are going to make the above offer, which is the final word that can be said by any distiller on price and quality. We are registered distillers and know the whiskey business from start to finish, and know that once you try these goods you will want no other.

Notice the announcements of other distillers and mail order whiskey houses, and see if they offer Straight Kentucky Whiskey, see if they guarantee or even state that their whiskey is so blend, so aged or so mature. While you probably know somewhat straight whiskey means, yet we wish again to state that straight whiskey means exactly what the word implies—straight—not blended with cheap wines, etc., to color up same, but is compounded with adulterated mixtures, but every bottle contains whiskey and nothing but whiskey. Some other distillers do offer Straight Kentucky Whiskey, but just look at their prices in comparison with ours.

We have noticed this blended, adulterated stuff sold under the name of whiskey for some time, and believe it a good business step on our part to make an offer that cuts the desire to adulterated trash cannot equal, in order to quickly induce all whiskey purchasers to try the Straight Kentucky Whiskey and see the difference.

IN DEFIANCE OF ACTUAL COST

You will notice that some whiskey houses have resorted to giving a present as an inducement to get your order for their whiskey. When you buy whiskey, make the quality of the goods and price get your order—no need of giving premiums with whiskey for the same price and quality.

This remarkable offer is made in defiance of actual cost to us. Now, there is no reason why more than whiskey to be Straight Kentucky Whiskey—so pure and mellow that it will cost you less than from $5.00 to $6.00 per gallon to duplicate in the regular way. Send us $4.75, either Express or P. O. Money Order, Registered Currency or the Adams Express Company (no personal checks, we cannot afford to pay exchange on them), and we will accept this offer for 12 full quart bottles (3 gallons) of this superior Straight Kentucky Whiskey. After receiving the whiskey, put it to any test you like, and if not entirely satisfactory, do not hesitate to return them and get your money back at once. Every statement in this announcement is backed by a company with a $500,000 paid-up capital.

$1,000 OFFER We offer $1,000 cash that this whiskey is not exactly as represented through any test, whatever, that this whiskey is not according to above conditions. Remember, we take all goods back at our expense paying the express charges, if you are not pleased, even after using same, and will refund your money at once.

PURE FOOD DISTILLING CO., Jerome Endler, Manager, Dept. B-8 St. Louis, Mo.

CLOTHING SALESMEN WANTED

Good men can secure permanent employment and make big money by selling our excellent line of Tailoring. No experience necessary; no capital required. We furnish full line of samples, stationery, advertising matter and everything necessary to start you in a profitable business. We regulate your prices to suit yourself.

LARGE SAMPLE OUTFIT ABSOLUTELY FREE

Write to us and we will send you by return mail a complete Fashion Folder of cloth samples, special price catalogs, and we will start you in a mo-paying business at once. Don't delay, but write us today and open your eyes to the possibilities of making money easily.

Brizde, Fryo & Rogevsky Tailors
158 A Market St.
CHICAGO, ILL.

YOUR HEART

Does It Flutter, Palpitate or Skip Beats? Have you Shortness of Breath, Tenderness, Numbness or Pain in left side, Dizziness, Fainting Spells, Spots before eyes, Sudden Starting in sleep, Nervousness, Nightmare, Weak Weak Spells, Oppressed Feeling in chest, Choking Sensation in throat, Pain or Numbness on left side, Cold Hands or Feet, Difficult Breathing, Dropsy, Swelling of feet or ankles, or Neuralgia around heart? If you have one or more of the above symptoms, don't fail to use Dr. Miles' Celebrated Heart Tablets, the remedy which has made so many marvelous cures. Not a cure-"quack" medicine. One out of four has a weak or diseased heart. Three-fourths of those do not know it, and thousands die who have been wrongfully treated for the Stomach, Lungs, Kidneys or Nerves. Don't drop dead like hundreds of others when Dr. Miles' Heart Tablets will cure you.

FREE TREATMENT COUPON

Any sufferer mailing this coupon, with their name and address, to Dr. F. G. Miles' Medical Co., Dept. 243, Elkhart, Indiana, will receive a box of Heart Tablets for trial, by return mail, postpaid, free of charge. Don't risk death by delay. Write at once.

Don't Wear A Truss

After Thirty Years' Experience I Have Produced An Appliance for Men, Women or Children That Cures Rupture.

I SEND IT ON TRIAL.

If you have tried most everything else, come to me. Where others fail is where I have my greatest success. Send attached coupon today and I will send you free my illustrated book on Rupture and its cure, showing my Appliance and giving you prices and names of many people who have tried it and were cured. It is instant relief when all others fail. Remember, I use no salves, no harness, no lies. I send on trial to prove what I say is true. You are the judge, and once having seen my illustrated book and read it you will be as enthusiastic as my hundreds of patients whose letters you can also read. Fill out free coupon below and mail today. It's well worth your time whether you try my Appliance or not.

FREE INFORMATION COUPON

C. E. Brooks, 240 Brooks Bldg., Marshall, Mich.
Please send me your book, plain wrapper, illustrated book and full information about your Appliance for the cure of rupture.

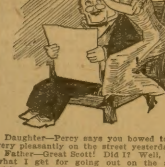
Name.....

Address.....

City..... State.....

Pickled Peppers

Bad Blunder.



Daughter—Percy says you bowed to him very pleasantly on the street yesterday.

Father—Great Scott! Did I? Well, that's what I get for going out on the street without my glasses.

LET'S PRETEND.

Let's pretend that you and I
Love each other—"true as true"—
It's a joyous game to try—
Let's pretend!

I'll be lover-like, and you—
You'll return me sigh for sigh,
Kiss for kisses—all the charms do—
Let's pretend!

If we find, as time slips by,
That our play's in earnest, too,
All the better. Meanwhile, why,
Let's pretend!

A Physician Fooled by Snakes.

An old gypsy woman called on a Parisian doctor not long ago, and beseeched him to visit her daughter. She said, was tying dangerously ill in a caravan on the fortification near by.

"I have tried the serpent cure," she said, "without success. If you will only come to pay your fee in advance, I am sure, doctor, you will come."

The medico was kind-hearted, and little curious—and, as the gypsy pressed a one hundred franc note into his hand, he consented to go and do what he could.

As the doctor entered the tent in his consulting room to get change for his visitor, she again mentioned the "serpent cure," and he asked her what it was.

"This," she said, and, taking a box from under her jacket she opened it and a dozen snakes out on the floor. The doctor was startled, and rushed out of the room. When he returned with a stout stick in his hand, he found that the women and the snakes had vanished, and all the money in the safe had also gone. True, he still held the one hundred franc note in his hand, but this proved to be counterfeit. He has not seen the gypsy since, and no caravan containing a sick person could be found.

The Minister's Mistake.

A newly appointed Scotch minister on his first Sunday in his new church had reason to complain of the poorness of the collection.

"Mon," replied one of the elders, "they are close—verra close. But"—confidentially—"the auld meenister he put three or four saxpences into the plate hisself, just to gie them a start. Of course he took the saxpence awa' with him afterward."

The new minister tried the same plan, but the next Sunday he again had to report a dismal failure. The total collection was not only small, but he was grieved to find that his own sixpences were missing.

"You may be a better preacher than the auld meenister," exclaimed the elder; "but if ye had half the knowledge o' the world an' o' yer flock in particular, ye'd ha' done what he did an' glued the saxpences to the plate!"

From the Country.

An amusing incident occurred in a hotel a few nights ago. It appears that a farmer from South Jersey, who was unusually ignorant of city ways, went to a hotel with his son. The father retired early, but the son went out to "see the town."

At 12:30 o'clock the farmer went downstairs and inquired of the night clerk if the boy had returned yet. He was told that he had not. The father went back to bed, but about an hour later he again appeared before the clerk and said:

"Hain't Jack in yet?"

Again he was informed that the lad was out. The old man made several subsequent trips, and still his boy was among the missing. Finally, at 3:30 o'clock the farmer trudged wearily down the stairs and asked again if his boy had returned.

"No," was the reply, replied the night clerk.

"Wal, I guess he won't come in, then. Guess you needn't wait up any longer."

Too Hard.

Landlord—Lincoln once slept in that bed you occupied last night.

Guest—That's more than I could do.

An Imperfect Inventory.

Mother—And so your friend Clara is soon to be married?

Daughter (just returned from long absence)—Yes: doesn't it seem strange? I hadn't heard a word about it until I called to see her this morning. She showed me her trousseau. It's perfectly lovely, just from Paris, and she has the handsomest ring I ever saw, and she showed me the house she is to live in, and the furniture she has selected, and the horses and carriages she is to have. She showed me everything except the man she is going to marry. I guess she forgot about him.

Extraordinary.

Hewitt—Here is something out of the ordinary.

Jewett—What is it?

Hewitt—A spelling match won by a college graduate.

True to the Sex.

"Yes, dear," said the lady aviator of 1910, "I have bought a model aeroplane and intend to run it all myself. What should I call it?"

"Better call it 'Pet,' darling," advised hubby.

"That is a cute name, but—er—why did you select it?"

"Because it is nothing unusual for you to fly in a jet, you know."

And then and there she said he was the meanest man in seven States.

How to Get Rid of Catarrh.

A Simple, Safe, Reliable Way, and It Costs Nothing to Try.

Those who suffer from catarrh know its miseries. There is no need of this suffering. You can get rid of it by a simple, safe, inexpensive, home treatment discovered by Dr. Blosser, who, for over thirty-five years, has been treating catarrh successfully.

His treatment is unlike any other. It is not a spray, douche, salve, cream, or inhaler, but is a more direct and thorough treatment than any of these. It clears out the head, nose, throat and lungs so that you can again breathe freely and sleep without that stopped-up feeling that all catarrh sufferers have. It heals the diseased mucous membranes and arrests the foul discharge, so that you will not be constantly blowing your nose and spitting, and at the same time it does not poison the system and ruin the stomach as internal medicines do.

If you want to test this treatment without cost, send your address to Dr. J. W. Blosser, 27 Walton Street, Atlanta, Ga., and he will send you by return mail enough of the medicine to satisfy you that it will be claims for it as a remedy for catarrh, catarrhal deafness, hay fever, asthma, diseases, asthma, bronchitis, colds and all catarrhal complications. He will also send you an illustrated booklet. Write him immediately.

A Cheerless Habitation.

Downtown—Dining at the club pretty popular now, I see?

Upton—Yes; the girl has gone off, and there is no one at home to do any cooking.

Downtown—I thought there were half a dozen women at your house.

Upton—There are. But they are all relatives.

TO WOMEN WHO DREAD MOTHERHOOD

Information How They May Give Birth to Happy, Healthy Children Absolutely Without Pain—Sent Free.

No woman need any longer dread the pains of childbirth or remain childless. Dr. J. P. Dye has devised his life to relieving the sorrows of women. He has proved that all pain at childbirth may be entirely banished, and he will gladly tell you how it may be done without any cost to you. Write for your name and address to Dr. J. P. Dye, 305 Lewis Block, Buffalo, N. Y., and he will send you, free, a most wonderful book which tells how to give birth to happy, healthy children, absolutely without pain; also how to cure sterility. Do not delay but write today.

Quack-Quack!

Great Editor—Why in the world don't you advertise your remedies in the newspapers?

Eminent Physician—People would think me a quack. Why don't you sign your name to the articles you write for publication?

Great Editor—People would think me a goose?

J. P.

! Those suffering from weakness and lack of vigor should take JUVEN PILLS. One box will tell a story of marvelous results. This medicine has more rejuvenating, vitalizing force than has ever before been offered. Sent postpaid only on receipt of this advertisement and $1. Made by the originators of J. Hood Co., proprietors Hood's Sarsaparilla, LOWELL, MASS.

Wanted More.

The president of the Keepsafe Trust Company, who long had been trying to persuade the billionaire to become a depositor, was explaining to the latter the facilities of protection which his company afforded.

$3.50 RECIPE CURES WEAK MEN---FREE

Send Name and Address Today

—You Can Have It Free and Be Strong and Vigorous.

I have in my possession a prescription for nervour debility, lack of vigor, weakened manhood, failing memory and lame back, brought on by excesses, unnatural drains, or the follies of youth, that has cured so many worn and nervous men right in their own homes—without any additional help or medicine—that I think every man who wishes to regain his manly power and virility quickly and quietly, should have a copy. So I have determined to send a copy of the prescription free of charge, in a plain, ordinary sealed envelope to any man who will write me for it.

This prescription comes from a physician who has had long experience with men, and I am convinced it is the most startling combination for the cure of deficient manhood, and vigor failure ever put together.

I think I owe it to my fellow man to send them a copy in confidence so that any one anywhere who is weak and discouraged with repeated failures may stop drugging himself with harmful patent medicines, secure what I believe is the quickest-acting restorative, upbuilding, NERVE TOUCHING remedy ever devised, and so cure himself at home, quietly and quickly. Just drop me a line like this: Dr. A. E. Robinson, 3701 Look Building, Detroit, Mich., and I will send you a copy of this splendid recipe in a plain ordinary envelope free of charge. A great many doctors would charge $5.00 to $5.00 for merely writing out a prescription like this—but I send it entirely free.

SPORTING GOODS. Dice and Cards a specialty. Cat. Free. R. L. Smythe Co., Newark, Mo.

GAY LIFE 10c. Sex Nov. Co., Dept. 8, Harrison, Mich.

Postals men want; different from others, better. 12 for 25c. New Art Co., P.O. Box 281, Chicago, Ill.

RARE RIPE! Latest nature cards. You want one? 10 for 25c. Rare Art Co., 32 Harcourt Ct., Council Bluffs, Ia.

IT WORKS! When she sees a man knows she needs it. Sure go! No. B. Wm Co., Council Bluffs, Ia.

SPORTING GOODS Dice, Cards, etc. Catalog Free. H. BELL, Moorestown, Ohio.

RACY postcards; for men only; loud ones; frost views; 5 for 10c, 12 for 25c. Box 22868, Albion, Mich.

SOMETHING different. For 25c we'll send Novelties, get Something; No. A Owl Co., Council Bluffs, Ia.

12 GAY LOVE LETTERS & 20 PICTURES the kind men like; all 30c. Hook Co., Box 2413, Providence, R.I.

25 ART and Pretty Girl Views, some in gold and silver colors, 10c. 25 for 25c. OSCAR CO., GLOSTER, R. I.

RODS SPANISH NEEDLES, COLOGNETTES Tricopher Fusiliers, Buckles, Pens, Pencils, Key Chains. F. S. R. ASSOC., Ft Dodge, Ia.

84 Cards for 10c 40 Best View Post Cards and 44 other good cards—70 in all—only 10c. Send 2c stamp for sample. Best by mail. WILLIAMS & CO., 3070 Archer Ave., Dept. 84, Chicago Ill.

A Maiden's Dream! Before and After. 6 New Post Cards (for men only), also 39 other good views; all 10c. Box 1029, Providence, R. I.

LOVERS GUIDE, or 144 Easy Road to Marriage Tells How to Win Any Person You Love. Sent Postpaid for 10c. Just a Few Lines Showing How to Meet the Proper Persons, Secure Their Confidence, Love and Affection. Also Contains Many Valuable Recipes, Secrets, Etc. Address, LOVERS GUIDE CO., Box 1029, Providence, R. I.

WHITE SLAVE TRADE. 64,000 words, paper bound, 25c. Uncle Sam's free with Catalog. Books Beautiful and Immoral, "white slave" cases, 10c sealed plain wrapper. Big Catalog 2c. Sample Book and Catalog 10c. Agents 50 to 100% profit. Big 50c. up-to-date catalog 10c. Agents wanted. Sample Book and catalog 25c. postage 2c extra. Sample Book and catalog and 25 partners for name and 10c. postage and 2c. stamp

EASTER MORNING.

When the happy brooks are running
Races,
Down from the hills with a laugh and
a leap,
Who are these in the woodland places
That up from the mosses and dead
leaves creep?
Here's bonny Wakerobin, so early astir,
And Puss-in-Whyte in silver fur;
And Wind Flowers lifting their sweet,
pale faces,
And blue-eyed Hepatica, half asleep

The forest cathedral's little preacher,
Jack-in-the-Pulpit, is not yet here.
But every wakening wildwood creature
Has an Easter sermon sweet and clear.
Each bud that breaks from the dark, low
mold,

Each first-leaf out of its prison rolled,
Each blade of grass is a silent teacher
Of the life that springs from the buried
year.

The Easter Hare.

In America the hare or rabbit is a symbol of Easter in the family celebration of the day. This comes to us from Germany, where the hare is supposed to leave gayly colored eggs for the pleasure of the good children. On Easter eve the mother and the father hide colored eggs about the house, and when morning comes the children hunt for them, not forgetting to give thanks to the mystical hare that has so kindly left them.

The use of the hare as a symbol is the result of the moon's influence on the festival. The young of the hare are born with their eyes open, unlike rabbits, and the animal is a sign of watchfulness or wakefulness. So is the moon, because she watches all night long. Moreover, the hare has for untold centuries been regarded as the symbol of beginning, of the opening of a new year, of a season.

AN EASTER VISIT.

Mr. and Mrs. Bunny Brown
Went foraging too near the town.
They nibbled grass till very late,
Inside of Farmer Terry's gate.

Then Jack and Mary begged them stay,
Because they came on Easter day;
Jack gave them dainty things to eat.
And named them "Nancy Jane" and
"Pete."

Now Pete was quite an acrobat.
He jumped and sprang this way and that,
The children laughed until they cried,
To see the antics that he tried.

They put their Easter eggs around
Beside the bunnies on the ground.
And played they hid them (just for
fun)—
Whoever heard of such a bun!

Easter Recipe.

To make chocolate Easter eggs—First, take the contents from as many eggs as you desire to make by punching a large hole in each end of the shell. The eggshell is to stand on the large whole end when finished. Wash the shells thoroughly and leave them in cold water till you are ready to use.

Then make a batch of chocolate fudge as follows:

1 cup of milk.
1 cup of sugar.
1 pinch of soda.
3 squares of chocolate.
Butter the size of an egg.
Put the soda in the milk and scrape the chocolate. Mix all together until when you drop a little in water it will make a ball in your fingers. Take off the fire then, and beat a couple of minutes.

Set the eggshells in a pan filled with sand or sawdust, or in egg cups, good end down, and fill with the fudge. When hard, turn each upside down in an egg cup and serve at table. They will be a great surprise as well as delight.

EGGSTRAORDINARY!

"Eggscuse me," young Eggbert to teacher did say,
"But Easter will come in a week and a day;
Would it not be eggsalting to make a new rule
Eggsacting each child to bring eggs here to school?

"Eggsactly at Easter the school term eggspires,
So let's have an egg hunt ere each one retires."
"An eggscellent thought," said the teacher, "and I,
For one, am eggstremely delighted to try."

Eggsactly at twelve, when eggsamples were done,
The day before Easter eggsitement did run,
With lessons forgotten, for eggs they did spy,
Until they'd eggshausted the whole egg supply.

"'Tis fitting," said teacher, "that now I should call
An eggsamination for each child and all."
But ere any more of the sort she could say
Each child said "Eggscuse me," and hurried away.

No Explanation.

"Jim," said the bigger tramp as he warmed up to the coffee, "what's this 'ere Lent we've been havin'?"

"Can't say," replied the smaller one. "Has it got somethin' to do with religion?"

"Mebbe."

"Well, what's Easter?"

"Dunno."

"Hain't it a day of rejoicin' or somethin'?"

"Mebbe."

"But don't you know?"

"Strike me if I do. All I know about it is that last Easter I stood a week longer right along before I got a bite to eat, and then because I wanted the coffee warmed up I was run in by a cop and got 30 days. It may be a day of rejoicin', but I hain't takin' any chances this year."

EASTER DAWN.

Breaks the joyful Easter dawn,
Clearer yet, and stronger
Winter from the world has gone,
Death shall be no longer!
For away good angels drive
Night and sin and sadness,
Earth awakes in' smiles, alive
With her dear Lord's gladness.

Roused by him from dreary hours
Under snow-white chilly—
In his hand he brings pure flowers,
Brings the rose and lily.
Every little buried seed
Into life he raises;
Every sere flower of the wood
Chants the dear Lord's praises.

Open, happy flowers of spring,
For the sun has risen!
Through the silent air his voices ring,
Calling you from prison.
Little children dear, look up!
Toward his brightness pressing.
Lift up every heart, a cup
For the dear Lord's blessing.

A Swap Party.

We all know many games to play, but the trouble is to think of them at the right minute. If you are going to give a candy pull or a cobweb party it is well to have a good many games all sorted up beforehand, alternating the romping games with the quieter ones, in the right programme, so that there may be no awkward pauses.

Have you ever been to a "Swap" party? Each one is supplied with four or five little bundles, wrapped so that no one else can suspect the contents. The bundles may contain anything, from a pencil ball to a sunbonnet. Each one praises up his own property without telling what it is, and the beginning is made with great show of bargaining. When every one has exchanged, the parcels are opened, and the one who has made the poorest swap has to sit in a chair and forfeit a game, or in some way entertain the company. After this come other games, with apples and nuts for refreshments.

Symbol of the Egg.

Easter without eggs would be a curious feast, as closely has the day been associated with them. The egg is the symbol of resurrection and has been so for centuries. This idea goes back to the Egyptian worship of the beetle, because that insect was thought to have the power of burying itself and rising again. When its eggs were discovered the symbolism was transferred to them. The first photographers were red and this color was used to indicate the blood of the savior. To this day in Russia the peasants on Easter day present each other with red colored eggs, one saying: "He is risen," and the other making the response: "He is risen, indeed."

DILEMMA.

Oh, mustn't it be awful
To be the weather vane—
When some folks want the sunshine,
And others want the rain!

The Edison!

The latest style Edison Phonograph in our new outfit No. 10—this superb entertainer, Mr. Edison's latest, final improvement of phonograph—shipped

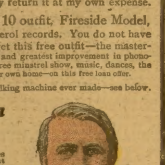
FREE

Yes, free. I don't ask a cent of your money—I don't want you to keep the phonograph—I just want to give it to you on a free loan—then you may return it at my own expense.

Read the Offer: I will ship you free this grand No. 10 outfit, Fireside Model, with one dozen Gold Moulded and Amberol records. You do not have to pay me a cent C. O. D. or sign any leases or mortgages. I want you to get this free outfit—the masterpiece of Mr. Edison's skill—in your home. I want you to see and hear Mr. Edison's final and greatest improvement in phonographs—that is convince you of its wonderful superiority. Give a free concert; give a free minstrel show; a free dance, the old fashioned hymns, grand opera, comic opera—all that you want to hear—right in your own home—on this free loan offer.

MY REASON—My reason for this free loan offer, this extra liberal offer on the finest talking machine ever made—see below.

MR. EDISON Says: *"I Want to see a Phonograph in Every American Home."*



The phonograph is the result of years of experiment; it is Mr. Edison's pet and hobby. He realizes fully its value as an entertainer and educator; for the improvement in the quality of the city's right to the village and the farm home. **Now, the new Fireside Edison Phonograph** of our outfit No. 10, 1910 Model, is the latest and greatest improved talking machine made by this great inventor. Everybody should hear it; everybody must hear it. If you have only heard other talking machines before, you cannot imagine what beautiful music you can get from the outfit No. 10. This new machine is just out and has never been heard around the country. **We want to convince you;** we want to prove to you that this outfit is far, far superior to anything ever heard before. Don't miss this wonderfully liberal offer.

MY REASON I don't want you to buy it—I don't ask you to buy anything. But I do feel that if I can send you this great phonograph and convince you of its merits, of its absolute superiority, you will be glad to invite your neighbors and friends to your house to listen to the outfit, and I feel sure that many of them will be so delighted to buy one of these great outfits like it, or that you will be glad to accept the Edison Phonograph outfit complete with records for only $2.00 a month—$2.00 a month—the easiest possible payment and, at the same time, a rock-bottom price. Perhaps, you would rather have a phonograph, and if you ever intend to get a phonograph, now is the chance to get the brand new and most wonderful phonograph ever made, and on a most wonderful free loan. But I'll bet you not your friends want the machine, that is O. K.; I simply want you to have it on a free loan, and perhaps somebody who heard the machine will buy one later. I am glad to send it on the free loan offer anyway. I will take it as a favor if you will send me your name and address so I can send you the catalog—then you can decide whether you want the free loan. There are no strings on this offer, absolutely none. It is a free loan, that is all. I ask not one cent of your money, I only say if any of your people want to buy a phonograph, they may get one for $2 a month, if they want it.

Now, remember, nobody asks for a cent of your money. I want every responsible household in the country, every man who wants to see his home cheerful and his family entertained, every good father, every good husband, to write and get these free concerts in his home. Remember the loan is absolutely free from us, and we do not even charge you anything C. O. D.

Write for the FREE Edison Catalog

In this Catalog you will find a complete list of music and vaudeville entertainments. You can pick out just the kind of records you want for the entertainment you want on the free loan in your own home. Get this catalog at once, then you can decide whether or not you need a free loan, and when you want it. You can also decide just the music you want. Remember, I will appreciate a chance to show you my splendid outfit—the climax of Mr. Edison's skill—on this free loan offer. I will appreciate it especially if you will send me your name and address right now, so I can fully and clearly explain our method of handling the Edison Phonograph on free loan. **SIGN THE COUPON TODAY.** Do it right now.

Just sign and mail the coupon at the right and get this FREE catalog. Write today.

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